Interview with Joseph John Jova

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR JOSEPH JOHN JOVA

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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Q: This is an interview with Ambassador Joseph John Jova. I am Charles Stuart Kennedy. It is being done on behalf of The Association for Diplomatic Studies.

Mr. Ambassador, I wonder if you could give me something about your background? Where did you come from?

JOVA: Sure thing, Stu. I was born on a private property called Danskamer [ph.], in what was then the village of Browston, about five miles north of Newburgh, New York in Orange County. I'm describing it because all that has been bulldozed and is now a great big generator for Central Hudson. The only thing left actually of what had been a historic mansion really, is the church my grandfather and grandmother built, the Catholic church there, called Our Lady of Mercy. It is very much in mind because I just went up this past weekend to help celebrate its 100th anniversary.

Q: Without getting into a long genealogical thing, where did your family come from?

JOVA: The Jova name is Catalan, S-i-t-g-i-s, just south of Barcelona. And my great grandfather was born in 1797. He went to Cuba after the Napoleonic wars and the crown owed him prize money and he took it in a big land grant in Cuba—a land grant which

I think was quite big. He married a woman who also came from a Spanish family, but was born in Cuba and who was already well off, I think. He was Catalan, they're pretty bright; and had been an officer on ships; had the right organizational skills; the technical skills. He was involved in using steam mills instead of oxen and animal power for the sugar mills in Cuba, and building the first railroad from Santa Clara, Cuba to the sea. He became very, very rich. He had several children, one of them was studying in Boston, New York, England a bit, and then studied engineering in New York. I believe it was Columbia University, and that gave him a unique background for a Latin, really, where people, if they studied at all in those days, would become lawyers, or doctors, and that sort of thing, or military people.

My grandfather married a French woman of a New York French family that were also in the sugar business. I suppose that's what brought them together, and that made them stay in New York more than in Cuba where he handled the New York end of the business, but also would go back and forth to Cuba to put up new machinery, or to design new mills.

After the ten year War of Independence in Cuba, 1894 I think, the Cuban sugar industry was wrecked at that moment with the burden of debt because the rebels had burned down the cane, or the patriots had burned down the cane fields. There was also a global depression on, and he attempted to persuade his brothers to really borrow more money and adopt a new method of centralization, one big sugar mill to serve various estates connected by trains, which, of course, was the wave of what was then the future. And he had difficulty coming to an agreement with his brothers, and he finally said, “You keep the land, you keep the debts, I'll stay in New York.” What little he was able to get out of Cuba, plus selling a place in New York City I suppose, he built a brickyard at the water's edge of his summer property which was called Danskamer[ph.], and established a brickyard there which maintained the whole family until a very few years ago. Brick was very big. It was one of the last ones to endure. I helped close down that company in the early '70s.

My father then married my mother. He went to visit Cuba and met my mother who was still young, and they fell in love, and then a few years later my mother and her family came to stay in New York State, to summer in the Adirondacks. And they fell really seriously in love, and were married. My mother was half Spanish and half Cuban. Her father was a Spanish consular officer, and her mother was Cuban.

Q: Where did you get educated?

JOVA: I went to Dartmouth. I studied in Newburgh. As a child I was sent to boarding school in Coral Gables, Florida—a long time ago—and then I went to Dartmouth.

Q: So when were you born?

JOVA: In 1916.

Q: And you graduated from Dartmouth?

JOVA: In '38.

Q: Had you begun to develop any interest in foreign affairs at this time?

JOVA: Yes, partly through my Spanish grandfather who had been in the diplomatic service. That gave me an interest, and I was interested in foreign affairs anyway, and being bilingual, and having spent time in Cuba because we spent part of each year in Cuba when I was small. I had that interest. Of course, that was ridiculous when I got out in 1938, I mean it was the depression, they weren't taking anyone anyway. So I did the next best thing. I had to get a job which was the big thing in 1938, but also there was no Peace Corps, etc., for adventure, so I was lucky enough to get a job with the United Fruit Company, and they sent me to Guatemala. I spent three years in Guatemala on the plantations; for the first part of my time as time keeper, they called it; and then I finally got the title of assistant overseer. Then after that I was promoted to be division inspector. So

I learned quite a lot about living there, and working with the peasants, and modest people that you'd never have met if you go down as a diplomat.

Q: I wonder if you could give some idea of how you saw it at the time, and what the situation was. Because, you know, the United Fruit Company, as you well know, must have been thrown in your face a hundred times, or a thousand times in dealing with Latin America about industrial colonialism, or whatever it is. How did you find the operation, looking at it at that time, and somewhat in retrospect too?

JOVA: Well, there's no question it was a highly stratified, imperialist if you will, type of enterprise. It was still living in the beginning of the century when it was founded. After that I went to the Navy and when everybody else complained about the discipline and respect for your superiors, this was normal to me after three years with the United Fruit Company in Guatemala. It had a strong British influence, also.

Q: It was very stratified even among the overseer class.

JOVA: No. Actually we were classifiable. But there's no question also that it did an awful lot towards the development of those countries, much more than I thought at the time. I thought at the time, “Gosh, we wear out the soil and they just pick up the tracks, pick up the electric lines, etc., and start a different plantation.”

But much more was left than I realized, and I didn't really recognize this until a quarter of a century later. I returned to Central America as U.S. ambassador to Honduras, and then I saw that education, technical skills; those had come from the United Fruit Company. For instance, the industrial area of Honduras, San Pedro Sula, why? Because there were trained people there. There were technicians, there were accountants, there were bookkeepers, engineers, mechanics, executives, etc. My wife also made the comment that whenever there was one of the women in Yusapa [ph.], which is far from there but some stood out with leadership qualities, a more lively mind. If you scratch the surface it turned out that very probably she had been born, or at least brought up, on the United Fruit

Company, or the Standard Fruit Company areas, where her father had been a Honduran, or a Guatemalan executive of one sort or another, or a lawyer in the company, and she had gone to the American schools. So the United Fruit Company really did contribute a lot too. Actually it was a creature of its age, just like we can't criticize Columbus or Queen Isabella for doing things 1492 ways instead of 1992 ways. Actually it was a little bit the same way, after all it was late 19th century-early 19th century institution.

Q: Did you have any contact with the American embassy, or diplomatic, or consular personnel at that time?

JOVA: Yes, a bit, not much but a bit of course. They were very interesting to one who had that interest and just out of college. And actually, the DCM was John Moors Cabot who later on became a famous, many times, ambassador, and I have since become a friend of his while he was still living, and his wife—his widow—we still see. But that was very interesting. They had a political appointee as ambassador—the name will come to me in a moment. He had a French name, he was from the Carolinas. He couldn't have gotten away with things now, except the political appointees usually get away with a lot more than we would. But I remember the stories, and here he was in the same tradition as Baruch in Lisbon, and then later on Guggenheim, both of them examples of senile brutishness, as someone put it—chasing the secretaries around the desks, trying to pinch, and it was the same with this man in Guatemala.

Q: Was the bee still in your bonnet when you got caught up in that little thing called World War II, but still the diplomatic, did you sort of tuck that away?

JOVA: Yes, and I had a chance to join the Foreign Service, or one aspect, I suppose it was, FSS at that time. Because I had applied to get in, and I got this letter offering me an appointment, as a non-examinee entrance it would have been, because in those days they wanted to staff themselves. But the war was so near and I could see what was happening. I said, “This is going to be a sideline, I better do the war thing.” Actually, the offer may

have come when the war had already...by the time it reached me in Guatemala, perhaps Pearl Harbor had already occurred because I then decided to go home. I said, “This is really a key thing, and I'm going to go home and join the Navy,” and I finally did.

Q: You had a Naval tradition in your family.

JOVA: There was a Naval tradition, and most of the Americans who were young, said, “You're crazy. This has just started, we're safe down here. They'll never draft us here. We can raise rubber and rubber substitutes, and all that sort of thing.” But I said, “No, my mind is made up.” And I remember the general manager thought that was a very interesting thing, and shook my hand and said, “Young man, you're doing a great thing.” I went back—they were painting the ships already. They were painting the ships grey—the United Fruit—because they had already started suffering warfare in the Gulf of Mexico. I went back and to my surprise no one would have me because I was so underweight. I had had amoebic dysentery and all that sort of thing. All three services scoffed at me after having my physical exams, but a friend of my parents was a well known Naval officer. He commanded all the dirigibles of the day in Los Angeles.

Q: Oh, yes. Rosenthau.

JOVA: No, Captain Drexel—they're a family from Baltimore. He said, “That's ridiculous. You have a lot to offer. Let me have someone look into it.” And naturally, when somebody looks into it, then they look for ways...”If you would just gain a few pounds, we could ask for a waiver.” So the medical doctor suggested a banana and cream diet.

Q: Oh, this is coming from Guatemala...

JOVA: I hated bananas even before Guatemala. After Guatemala I detested them. But I went on it and did manage to gain a few pounds, and they gave a waiver. I suppose by that time the war was really started and they were worried. About March, I suppose, I went into the Navy.

Q: 1942.

JOVA: Pearl Harbor was December 1941, so it took me about three months to get in, maybe a little less, and they sent me to a training school in New York, and then where do they send me? To Panama. To the U.S. Naval District in Panama, where I had a very interesting time, and part of the time I was on minesweepers and that sort of thing. But most of the time I was in Operations Center, and they used me for various things to do with government relations because of my language. If we complain about people not having language now, there were many fewer then.

Q: I'm sure. What was the situation with the Panamanians at that time, from your vantage point?

JOVA: Well, there was always some anti-American feeling but at the same time the U.S. was key in Panama—the economy, etc. And again I was fortunate enough to have my uncles write to friends in Panama, so I got to know Panamanians much quicker, more rapidly, than I would have known just being on the Naval base. And that gave a very interesting aspect to my life, to see something of Panama people. They're very good people too. Naturally, there was a different situation there, different than many other places because the big fortunes weren't in agriculture and that sort of thing—I suppose some of them were—but really in owning land in the two cities in the District, and a lot of that land was the red light district. So some of the biggest fortunes, and the most respectable people, really their income came from prostitution. And, of course, one of the big things was they'd had riots, sailors had been assaulted in red light districts and the Admiral decided that the best way to cure this was to put the whole thing off limits. So they asked me then to be the shore patrol, and I was deputy provost marshal in Colon. The biggest task we had was to keep the boys out of the red light district, keep the boys out of the whore houses. And then when things calmed down a little bit, to control the whole thing.

It was a wonderful, maturing, experience. I learned an awful lot and we were all much more naive... But I could see that wasn't where they wanted to make me provost marshal. This was where you could really get in trouble sooner or later. They had brought down a lot of specially recruited specialist to help on this, who would have police backgrounds. Several of them were from Boston, and I remember one old timer—he seemed like an old timer to me—said to me (I was 23 or 24, and looked younger), “Sir, you better learn one thing. I'll tell you one thing, show me a copper and I'll show you a crook.” And It's true, the temptations were so great for those guys that were patrolling, particularly in the red light district, inevitably. And I said, “This is one way to get in trouble, and get your hands soiled,” plus the fact that I didn't join them. But I was able to live off the stories of that experience for years afterwards.

So I went back and then I was trying to go where the action was on the other side of the Atlantic, and I volunteered for the North African theater. Well, things moved a little slowly but they sent me to another training course, again, back in New York which was nice, you know, in New York City. It was to join something called a specially designed unit, called Drews 6. Remember that? I can't tell you exactly what the acronym meant, but it had something to do with organizing ports, and operating ports. The whole idea...there was an amphibious force, and we were able to go in with the Army, but at the same time to be able to do shore duties once we got there. And, of course, that finished and we were ready...and during the course of that, the landing in Brittany took place. So then they were looking for other places to land. First we were supposed to go to a little island off...the landings were Normandy...places in Brittany for us to go to. By the time we got there it wasn't necessary to land on a little island but we landed in Brest, and then went southward to seize a river port in France.

Q: It was also the site of our first consulate, or commercial office in the State Department.

JOVA: I didn't know. Well, I can see why because that was a big center for trade with the West Indies.

Q: It was also at that time where our Navy was going in there, John Paul Jones. This was during the revolution.

JOVA: The Germans were still there. The Navy didn't know it, and we approached. I suppose they saw 30 jeeps, and little personnel carriers coming, and they didn't know we had just landed. There were only 60 or 80 of us, or a 100, so a few shots were fired, nightfall came, and the next day we advanced further in towards the city. It turned out that the Germans really thought that it was a big operation, and they withdrew towards the mouth of the river.

Q: Saint Lazare, or something like that. They stayed there really until about the end.

JOVA: You got it, until almost the end. Well, that was the second incarnation. We stayed there and, of course, it was the very beginning of the war. Then they decided that that wasn't going to open up soon as a port, and they moved us, and attached us to the Canadians. We went around skirting Paris, to the campaign in Normandy for the capture of Le Havre. When we got into Le Havre it was smoking and just absolutely leveled—the stench of bodies and all that sort of thing. We set about setting up a port operation. I don't think I have ever worked so hard in my life.

Q: That was our major port. That was absolutely vital to the whole campaign.

JOVA: Well, little by little, and it was a very small little group with a Norwegian merchant marine who was now a Navy captain, but he had that merchant marine background. Tough, but very interesting, and I learned a lot from him too. But we worked around the clock really, hardly had time to go to the bathroom literally. Later on we were strengthened, more people were added, it became more formalized, there were watches—you know, eight hours on, eight hours off, whatever it was, and it became a lot less fun because it

really was...not that you were doing something important, and mind you, the harbor was all mined, ships blew up right in front of our eyes, the people had to be rescued. Little by little the place was cleared of mines and we started operating as a port about a year or two later, certainly all winter. It was a bitter winter.

I was called to Paris to Naval Headquarters to be interviewed, and they asked me—or I guess I proved suitable—they didn't ask me, they said, “You're going to Bordeaux to be liaison with the French Navy.” So that was another experience that stood me in good stead later on being in the Foreign Service.

By the way I should clarify that in Le Havre I had to deal with the French all the time—with the French Harbor Master, with the French mayor, with the French authorities, and that sort of thing. And a Consul finally arrived—I can't give you his name now, but an old veteran of the Consular Corps reopened that office.

Bordeaux was a fascinating experience because there we were further away from the war, it was also more advanced, peaceful too.

Q: There had not been a military campaign in Bordeaux as I recall.

JOVA: Exactly, it was away from the war, and that's why the French Navy was there in Naval Headquarters for that whole zone of France, and we had to be in good liaison with them. There were only three of us. The reason I quit, they wanted to remove the captain for some reason or other, the head of that little three-man mission, and the second man was a lush, and the other man was English. So I went down there and the captain left, and the lush we sort of controlled. But it also gave me a wonderful chance to get to know a lot of the people in Bordeaux, and I maintained friendships right through until recently—the wine families, and all that sort of thing. I was lucky in France, the non-military aspects of life because there again I had relatives who were French, others who had lived there most of their lives, Cubans for instance. And one of them, a cousin of my father's actually, was of the Abreu family. It was a big family, an important family in Cuba, but in France also,

because they'd lived in France from the 1850s you might say, onward, going back and forth. Well, when I went I was given a whole list of people to look up, little letters to them, and that makes a big difference with the French because they don't take in just anybody, and it made all the difference.

The war ended V-E Day, and then I realized the strength of communists in France. You really didn't sense it before, but they came out of the woodwork. Everybody in an American uniform—there weren't many of us, the blue jackets, the enlisted men, of course—they were aggressively shouting insults at us and that sort of thing at the V-E celebrations, a minor thing.

Q: About your time in Bordeaux, how did you find relations with the French? I mean, with the French Navy? There always was, going way back to Napoleonic times, and certainly after the Dakar thing, the French Navy hated the British Navy. Did you find yourself sort of interposed in a way? Or how did the French look upon you, and your work there—the professional naval officers?

JOVA: At the beginning, a little bit of frigidity, if you will. And also, mind you, the relations were all on the formal side. After all, the French are that way, and again they are official. But again, speaking French, it may not have been perfect French, but it was the only French I had, and having a rather open personality, I got along well with them. And I got along well with the principal people in Bordeaux, the principal authorities in Bordeaux. There was no consulate. The little office we had was in what had been the American Consulate, later on it was reopened again, but after we left. No, relations were good, but then mind you, it was De Gaulle that was insisting that they not wait passively for the channel ports, or the pocket ports to fall in their laps. There was a need to capture at least one of them. And the big combined operation took place with what was left of the French warships from the coast and our Air Force with aerial bombardments, and they captured the port at the mouth of the river.

Q: There's St. Nazaire and Laurent. Probably St. Nazaire.

JOVA: No, no, that is further...I think it was Laurent.

Q: Rochelle?

JOVA: No, that's different too. My French grandmother came from...

Q: I was just thinking of the Huguenots.

JOVA: Some of the principal wine people were Cuban also, and of course they were aghast when they visited their cousins. They weren't able to go because it was closed off during all the time the Germans were there. The natural thing is to blame the Americans because it was the American Air Force who had done it, but of course, it was at De Gaulle's request.

Well, the war was over, there we were in Bordeaux, with friends in the wine business and that sort of thing, it was too good to be true for the three officers, let alone the enlisted men. I know that our new chief, a Lieutenant Commander said, “Listen, everybody better shut up now, and stay low and maybe they'll forget us, and we'll be able to enjoy this.” Which we did. Which we did. But eventually those records—they were all computerized—and before you knew it they asked us to move immediately to Paris. So we went into Paris with our little convoy of jeeps, and a few cars that we had liberated from the Germans. The whole idea was to relax in Paris for a very few days, go to Marseille, and be shipped out to the eastern theater. So that was fine and we were all prepared to do it.

By the way, I did get a battle star, two battle stars out of that experience. It's kind of nice to know, an area ribbon, of course, with two stars on it.

Oh, I should jump backwards. After the Germans had all surrendered after V-E day we were given the job of doing interviews with the Germans that were there. And that was

very interesting to go to these places that had actually been liberated, or just surrendered days before—heavily mined around them, by the way—and the chance to talk and make the first reports on conditions in those ports, and the views of those Germans who we were able to speak with. Some of them, of course, were so rigid they would give their name, rank and serial number, this told a little bit more.

In the meantime you saw the effects of liberation, the women who had collaborated with their heads shaved and they were rounded up. That was the less appetizing part.

To go back to Paris: the flag lieutenant, an aide to the admiral, wanted to go home. V-E Day was over and done with and he had a family at home, and the admiral said, “No, no, I need you.” “Look at this last little group that has arrived from Bordeaux. There's one that speaks French, and he knows how to use his knife and fork, and seems to be bright. He would be a good replacement.” Well the admiral rather grudgingly interviewed me and said, “Yes, he might do.” So I stayed on in Paris, and I didn't go to Marseille. I'm not sure that anybody got to Marseille because a few weeks later—a month or two later—they had V-J Day. I remember listening to that on a little radio. So then I stayed in France. The admiral left and I stayed again with a little unit there doing the same sort of thing, liaison with the French navy, occupying ourselves with Le Havre. By the way. I went back there for a little while to run what was left of that.

They then announced they were going to give the Foreign Service examinations abroad, and I applied. I said, “Now I want to apply for that.” And I did, and took the examination—I think it was three days in those days.

Q: Three and a half days. I took it in '53, I think it was three and a half days.

JOVA: In Paris it was given in a USO beer hall. I remember the stench of stale beer early in the morning, and all these people writing their exam for three days. And of course, you didn't hear results in those days for months. Suddenly I got the thing, “Yes, you passed. Wait and see.” The next thing you had the orals, and there again months later. In the

meantime, Paris, peacetime, gasoline for the jeep, supplies from the commissary, we were young.

For one thing, I often wonder, looking at so many young officers that were with us, for instance, in Mexico at the end of my career, they were all smart, because they passed those examinations but a lot of them were ill-suited to be abroad. Do you know what I mean? Sure, there were some, but you're having a dinner party where you want to include some of the staff at various levels sometimes, and there were very few that you felt would contribute to it, or would really gain from it. So you find yourself including the same ones. Yes, there was a sense of discipline, the sense of having a common purpose, a team spirit. All that contributed to make them better officers, plus the inter-cultural experience that they had gained by having served abroad.

Q: And also in a disciplined service.

JOVA: For that reason, for the record, we can say that I found at the end of my career, for instance in Mexico which was a very big embassy, there were very bright young people who had taken the exams, which were hard, graduate degrees and all that sort of thing, but lots of them were much less suited, or very few of them were suited to a useful role in the embassy: a) because of discipline, perhaps because of the wives having different purposes; or b) at ease in language, etc., and at a dinner table. They were fine at cocktail parties, but there were a more limited number you could draw on to come to dinner to be useful, and also to be enriched by the experience.

Q: You took the exam and you passed it, and the oral exam. Is that right?

JOVA: Passed on the oral exam. In those days so many of us were still abroad, that they sent panels abroad to hear the person.

Q: How did you find the questions? Did you find yourself up against a different culture...you had been in the military, and all of a sudden you're up against the Foreign Service. What was your impression?

JOVA: No, no, I didn't find it all that different. Mind you, I was Navy, and I looked at some of those people that were waiting to take the exams, and you'd think they would have cleaned themselves up...Army, dog faces as we used to call them. You'd think they would have cleaned themselves up to appear there, to put on a better uniform, or a cleaner shirt or something. Well, I remember, I think I had only one blue uniform, but getting gasoline and taking the spots off it, shaving carefully, combing my hair, getting a clean shirt to go and make that kind of an appearance. And after all, I had the same background—acquired in a different way, if you will—but international experience, etc., these more senior people came to speak to me in the language at the end of a few minutes and they realized that I was bilingual in Spanish, and that I was fluent in French. But certainly you had a big advantage of being Navy in a nice blue suit, if you cleaned it up.

Q: You came into the Foreign Service in 1947.

JOVA: All this was taking place in '46, and then they didn't do anything about “where do we go?” “We'll call you. We don't have any money.” So I was in Paris, who was going to complain? But then suddenly the message came, “Come.” And I said, “I've just signed up for another...” “We'll handle that. You've just signed up for another period with the Navy, but proceed to Bremerhaven, and take a troop ship back.” And I did, and I think there were just three Navy people on that troop ship, and a few Navy prisoners. The poor guys were being brought back. I came back and I think I had ten days at home with my family, and then reported in to orientation, or whatever they called it, at the Foreign Service Institute.

Q: I wonder if you could give a little characterization of the people, yourself included, who were in the orientation, and how you looked at the world, and America's role in it, and how the orientation was conducted?

JOVA: This was sort of like an interim class, there were only about five of us for the first months or so. I don't know that any of them have survived. I've lost touch with all of those five and I couldn't give you their names. But then we were merged with a bigger group, and that included some people who were already coming in at higher levels. Was it called lateralization?

Q: Lateral entry.

JOVA: Yes, what a nice bureaucratic term, and that included people, for instance, like Dick Rubottom. Anyhow, that included some people who were already seasoned, etc. But even then it wasn't a big class, and it wasn't like now, it didn't last forever. They needed us, presumably, in the field. Then they made the assignments at the end of...as I say, it was only two or three months perhaps, and they assigned everybody else, and everybody got applause—so and so to Madrid, so and so to London, and so and so to B.A. And I was kept for the last, and I thought, “Gee, I don't want to go to Latin America again. I've done it with the United Fruit Company, I've done it with the Navy, I'm too sophisticated for that now. I've been in Europe, they can't get me back there. But maybe it would be nice if I could go to Europe again, and if not, probably to some place where French is a second language, maybe Black Africa, Middle East, or something.” Wrong. They kept me for the last and they said, “We're keeping you for the last because we don't even know how to tell you how to get there.” A dramatic pause, “Mr. Jova, you are assigned to the home of Sinbad the Sailor, Basra, Iraq.” Everybody else started, “Oh, ha, ha.” Everybody was laughing at me, with me, making jokes, so I scrambled looking for a Post Report, and you know how they wrote them, particularly then. My heart sank, I said, “I better cut my losses and get out right now. This is terrible.” But by the time dawn came, I said, “I've saved up enough money from my mustering out pay from the Navy that I'm an independent man. I can pay my way back.” In those days you had to pay your way back if you didn't stay.

Q: I might just add for the record that the Post Reports were submitted to inform people what living conditions were like, and in those days you got extra money for a bad post. It

was a brief in order to talk about how awful it was so you could get more money for going there, better allowances, which was very good for that purpose but not for the person going out there.

JOVA: It made those who were already there feel more heroic. But anyway, I decided this would be an adventure. If its too bad I can come home, but I'd be foolish not to try this adventure. And went, and of course, what do they say...God writes in a scribbled hand but it all makes sense in the long run. And it became true and the most important years of my life really. It fixed my career: because it was a very interesting time there. The little consulate in Basra—there were only three of us, plus two secretaries, and several locals—we also took care of Kuwait, which now is an embassy. But in those days we from Basra went down once a month—one of us went—in a four-wheel drive and spent three or four days providing services to the small American community, and also reporting on the oil which they had just started to ship out commercially and they were looking for more.

It was very important, calling on the ruler and the Sheikh, the so-called Prime Minister, and of course, the British agent who was very important. The British didn't want us to have a consulate there, let alone an embassy and that was unheard of. That's one of the reasons the U.S. hadn't opened one but we got around it by this, and we had a nice relationship with the political agent.

We also took care of Khorramshahr and Abadan on the river that were in Iran, because we were so much nearer than Tehran was. That again was an informal arrangement, and that meant that the embassy had a nice motor boat, or launch, a little boat or cruiser, which made it nice for other purposes too, for representational purposes. But it also permitted us to go to Abadan and Khorramshahr. Wonderful, because you did a little bit of everything at a post like that. You did commercial work, you did consular work, you did political work in effect. I mean what we were doing in Kuwait was political reporting, and political reporting from Basra also, oil reporting, petroleum reporting because while we were there they discovered oil in Basra which changed the community entirely.

The only other Americans were ourselves and the missionaries and one oil man who was prospecting. He was a geologist, an oil man of cultured background. Suddenly they started the Basra Petroleum Company and the first drillers arrived. These were tough, tough guys.

Q: Called roughnecks, and for good reason.

JOVA: That's right. Well, traditionally, Thanksgiving was celebrated at the consulate. We always had a dinner for the little American community, the missionaries. They were very lonely. I'm a Roman Catholic myself, but these were Reformed Church, and the semi-retired head of it was the famous Dr. Van Ness who had been there forever, a graduate of Princeton Theological; his wife was a Smith graduate. He had written books (spoke Arabic) on Iraq written during World War I for the British who were there. But we learned our Arabic from that too. But imagine, I found that blood and holy water doesn't mix. The next Thanksgiving we had the oil drillers came, and the first thing you know they were sitting on the laps of little 65-year old maiden lady missionaries...called harassment now. But still everybody was very well disposed.

The first Palestine war also started.

Q: This was the creation of Israel in 1948. A very crucial period for the United States.

JOVA: That's right. And that war, although the actual fighting was in Israel or in Palestine as it was called then, and the British were the targets of the patriots or the revolutionaries, or whatever you call what became Israelis. But we felt it all over the Middle East, and of course suddenly President Truman recognized Israel and we were still decoding the little messages that said, “Take security precautions because at 6:00 a.m. this morning (whatever the hell it was) the United States will officially recognize the State of Israel.” Well, we were working on those little strip methods when suddenly we heard the noise outside and sure, the mob was demonstrating, stones were raining on us, etc. And we found it out the hard way. That made our relationships much more tense with the local

authorities. This was true in Baghdad even more with the national authorities. Perhaps more there in Basra because we had a rather disagreeable governor and he was quite anti-American.

And, of course, the persecution of the Jews took place also. They were being expelled. In the case of some, executed, hung, and we did our best to protect those that worked for the consulate.

Q: How was the protection worked out?

JOVA: Well, intervening with the authorities. Most of them were leaving, or going underground. In some cases, I did something that was completely against regulations. One of our best employees asked me to take care of the family jewels. They were the bridal costumes, if you will. I saw them: gold crowns, etc., for his wife, and his mother, and his aunts, and I knew it was against regulations—you shouldn't put anything else in the safe but I said, “This is for a good cause.” I remember putting that in our safe until they were able to make some proper arrangements to take everything to Iran. Iran was much more welcoming, and it was relatively easy for them to go across.

But our principal officer, David McKillop—he died recently here—was called back to the U.S. to work on Atoms for Peace, and Atoms for Medicine. They asked him to go back for that and it was hastily done, and they assigned a man called Cliff English to replace him. Well, he was nice enough to say, “Yes, I can come now. Jova is not that dumb. He can handle this for three weeks, or four weeks.” Well, our Consul General in Jerusalem was assassinated—I think Mr. Wasson.

Q: Yes, I'm almost positive. Its not known which side it happened on.

JOVA: Nobody knew which side it happened on, but it was one of those terrible things, and Cliff English was derailed so to speak. They said, “Go and hold the much more important Consulate General in Jerusalem until we can find a permanent replacement, and then

you can proceed to Basra. So it turned out my entire second year was as acting principal officer in Basra. And as you can imagine, that's pretty heady stuff, and important stuff on your first post and in an area where so much was happening, and so much to report back. Well, I guess I got to be fairly well known, not many cables but certainly all the despatches, and airgrams.

Q: For the record, airgrams came in later, but despatches were the written form in which one could wax eloquent and then there were the cables which in those days were quite short.

JOVA: That's right, because they had to be done manually so we tried to avoid doing them too long. So much so that the Department asked me to become an Arab specialist, and go into language training. Well, I had to think quickly because it was very flattering but I thought it was the wrong thing to do on my first post to make such an important decision. I tried to be a good diplomat and expressed it that way. I said, “Try me again, but let's not do it right now. Let me see something else of the world.” I had hoped to go to Spain. All during my career I hoped to get Spain, I never did, but now I live there during the summers so maybe its more of an adventure and happier because answered prayers sometimes are the worst things. It is much better to have gone now on my own will, than to have been there.

On my “wish list” I put Spain, you had the choice of three areas—three posts. And strangely a friend from Navy days turned out to be in Personnel, and wrote me back and said, “I've just seen your “wish list” and we don't have anything in Spain coming up but we propose to assign you to Tangier and actually you could use what you've learned about the Arab world, and on a clear day you can look out your window and you can see Spain,” which is true.

By the way, I've said all this but I'll tell you, the most important thing in my life took place there. I met and married my wife. My family suddenly got a telegram saying, “She has said

yes." They got it before the preparatory letters. My wife is English, her father was stationed there also. He was on loan to the Iraqi government, he'd been in the Army in the Royal Engineers, and had also been with the Port of London Authority—PLA—and was loaned to the Iraqis as the number two in the Ministry of Communications and Transportation, as the Director General of Ports.

The Basra port trust was the last remaining bastion of British government investment and interest there, and that was a big job to run that because it also included the other side of the river. This has just been settled now with the peace treaty. Instead of going along the center of the river, the boundary has been on the Iranian floor of the river which, of course, was done by the British because of Abadan and Khorramshahr. That, again, was a big British investment in Iranian petroleum. And then they extended all the way out into the Persian Gulf because of the dredging operations, the buoyage. He was the big man on campus as far as Basra was concerned, in a great big house in the port, three yachts of different sizes for whoever uses them.

When his family came out a little later all the few young bachelors there were very excited because he had not only the wife and one smaller daughter, but one daughter was already 20-21 so everybody went to call very promptly on Mrs. Johnson, the mother, and met the daughters. We did from the consulate and little by little in that small community we saw more and more of each other, and then it started to get serious, and we became engaged and were married there in the little Catholic church in Basra, founded by the Portuguese mission in the 15th century. Now it was staffed not by Portuguese, but by Belgian Carmelites, French and Belgian Carmelites. We were married there. She was not Catholic but consented, and we spent our honeymoon in Bahrain which in the winter—we were married in February—and the winter is like Bermuda. The political resident, who was the head of all the political agents around there, lived in Bahrain and as he was a friend of my father-in-law he offered us his guest house. So we had four days there, which was lovely. We went down on the little steamer which stopped at various places, and it made a little cruise of two days, and then came back by plane from Dhahran where we stayed with

our colleague, Frank Meloy, now, since then, assassinated in Beirut. He was the consul in Dhahran.

You know, NEA was a very nice department to work for because it was small, it was adventurous enough, most of the posts were hardship posts. So there was a very good spirit. You never stayed in a hotel, you were always invited to stay with somebody, and of course we did our share in Basra for those coming through. But we stayed with Frank Meloy, and he, poor guy, thought it was going to be an overnight stay but these terrible sand storms took place. A squall came up and the whole place—I remember it was like sandpaper being driven, you were sandblasted, and there was a sort of wall around the consulate to try to keep the stuff out. So he had us for several days before the plane could fly again, and we went back to Basra, only to find that the inspectors had arrived. I was supposed to be back for them but they were very understanding, a honeymoon is a honeymoon, a marriage is a marriage. They'd only been there a few hours perhaps before I got there.

Q: I'd like to ask just a little more about Basra because this is an important period. How did you find dealing with the local Iraqis? I mean did you have the recognition of Israel and all that, and Iraqis are sort of known all over, particularly in late years, but even then being kind of bloody minded. They are a different breed of cat. Was this a problem dealing with them?

JOVA: The authorities, the governor I mentioned earlier, was so much so...he invited everybody, the rest of the consular corps, all five, except ourselves. I told that to the embassy and they complained to the Minister of Interior and he then apologized that he shouldn't have discriminated. It was more difficult with him, but with the Iraqi notables, as the French called them, our relations were very nice. For one thing, there were so few of us there, this tiny consulate, we were young and therefore were able to mingle quite readily, presentable, I suppose. The British community was well implanted there. There were no French except for the priests and some nuns. There was one shipping agent who

was American too, I left him out, as well as the missionaries. No, they were very good and they entertained a lot and the big thing was everybody went down in their boats—we, the consulate—had one, to these date farms where the Jews would frequently have the parties on their...I've even forgotten what the date farms were called. Date estates is the name in Arabic. They'd have these big parties, big sheep roasts, and a great buffet loaded with food. They wanted to be very flattering. They'd wait until the guest of honor arrived and they'd slaughter the sheep literally right there as they were getting off the boat, which was a little shaky for some.

Of course, we never saw the women. My wife and her mother, who was the wife of the Director General of the Port, they would see the women and go to tea parties, and card parties. And if there was a big party of the men, then the selected ladies would be taken to the women's quarters to visit, spend 20 minutes there with the ladies who couldn't come out. Everybody was veiled except for the Christian and Jewish women. All the Iraqis veiled from head to foot in those days, and in Kuwait also. It all changed afterwards. We have happy memories.

Q: How about relations with the British? The British were not too happy with the American intrusion, particularly commercially in oil. This was not an easy time because they were beginning to feel the pressure, particularly in that area. The Americans were beginning to supplant them. This must have been reflected despite the fact that you obviously married into the British establishment there. I mean, relations there must have been a problem.

JOVA: That's why we couldn't have a consulate in Kuwait, and the political agent was very careful that we didn't go too far. He would take us certainly to make our first call on His Highness the Sheik. That family was still ruling and have just returned there. So it was a question of being very attentive, and being proper. In Basra it wasn't a problem except that it was the British community that sort of set the tone of everything. And there was some snobbery and that sort of thing because they had tried to make it “Indja” all over again. When we saw the television series Jewel of the Crown...

Q: Jewel in the Crown, about the Raj, the British—the end of the Raj in India.

JOVA: That's right. We kind of allude to it because we felt part of it. I don't know if it was that way in Dhahran when you were there.

Q: The British weren't there but you still got a little of the touch of that on Bahrain—the resentment of the Americans. We were changing things; we didn't know how to treat the natives; we were making too many concessions to Iran; ARAMCO was being too nice to the Saudis; a firmer hand, and all that sort of thing.

JOVA: That's right, and also we're too informal, too casual. Well, their feeling was that it should be The Raj still, and they had the same kind of a set-up. The clubs were all imitating British India, the servants. I mean the sweeper number one, the sweeper number two, the cook, the dobe; they had Indian names for the laundry. But on the other hand it was pretty hard to be too stiff for too long with three young presentable Americans.

David McKillop was very warm-hearted, a Harvard graduate; myself; Bob Schott, our FSS officer who was—afterwards I was best man at his wedding, and he was best man at my wedding because he was married in Iraq too. He went to Iran but then returned to marry his wife who is the daughter of that geologist that I spoke about. He still looks as he might be only 35, and I suppose he must be 65 or 70. But we were young and made an effort and we found that we were included as honorary members of whatever was going on, and then we made our own way with the Arabs.

I've just mentioned the same thing took place in town, there were all kinds that you could visit; very interesting because Basra has a Shiite city. I never went into a mosque, not any of us. Not like Egypt where tourists go into the mosque. There were few families that were Shiite, few of the big families. Most of them were Sunni of the big important families, but some of them were Shiite. We made friends enough that one of them invited us—a younger one—to be his guests and we could accompany him and see some of the...it

must have been some meeting house rather than the mosque because we were able to be there. The son-in-law of the prophet, who was the founder of the Shiites, and they were all beating themselves, bare breasted and bare back, whipping themselves until blood came, and pounding their chests and repeating the little chant about Ali. So, in other words, we were able to make friends with people there. Naturally the ones you make friends with are the people who are more interested in Europeans, or foreigners, and were educated enough, also the shop keepers. But these were people who were people of substance. In those days they were the ones who were governing Iraq.

Also, another wonderful way to have an entree, is Arab lessons. Both Pamela and I had Arab teachers, and that's a wonderful way to find out what was going on, and I found that was the secret in Tangier which was our next post.

Q: You went to Tangier, did you go directly to Tangier?

JOVA: Home leave and hospital. First, I again had amoebas, and I left there very...that's the only thing I didn't like about the place. I was treated several times. In those days it was a bad treatment, retention enemas on a slanted bed. I remember that. But then I made that proposal, I said, “Look, I haven't had any real honeymoon. We're on our way back and I'm very ill, what about giving me permission to go to the American hospital in Beirut for treatment? They'll know more than they would at home, and then come home by sea.” It was easier to come home by sea in those days. I think they hadn't woken up to the fact that it was probably more expensive by sea, but they said yes. And we did that. I entered the hospital, and Pamela entered two days later. I remember everybody saying, “What a devoted pair. She joins him in the hospital.” She was analyzed as having “sand fly fever.” Only after we got home in the U.S. did we realize that Pamela kept falling down from time to time and one leg was actually thinner than the other. My mother, who was a born hypochondriac—I mean loved doctors—said, “You must go to the doctor.” And fortunately we did. It was analyzed as what she had had was polio. So we were so lucky. When I think of the people who are confined in wheelchairs, this was a mild case and she

got therapy right then, massage and exercise. And she's playing tennis right now as we speak 48 years later.

Q: You got to Tangier...

JOVA: Thanksgiving Day.

Q: 1949 and you stayed there until 1952. In the first place, what was the American interest in Tangier; and then also what the situation was like at that time?

JOVA: We were on the up then. I mean, AID programs had just been invented—it was called something else. Truman was President. We were the power, so we were interested in everywhere. And, of course, we came to have big interests in Morocco in general, and Tangier.

Q: This was later on because the bases came a little later.

JOVA: They came later. In Tangier while we were there we had Voice of America, or Radio Free Europe stations in Tangier, all directed against the Soviet Union. But we were also important because we were a signatory power of the Pact of Algeciras.

Back again to Theodore Roosevelt who invented our interest in Europe, you might say. We participated in that Pact of Algeciras that was precisely to regularize relationships with the Kingdom of Morocco, or the Empire of Morocco. And, I guess, among other things to recognize the French Protectorate over most of Morocco with a northern zone strip being given to Spain as a zone of Spanish protection. And then the area around Tangier, which had always been an international city because the Sudanese wouldn't let foreigners reside in Rabat, which was the capital. Therefore, this became the diplomatic capital that foreigners would go to, to Rabat to deal with—this was from the century previous. Tangier and a little area around it, ten miles or so, was declared to be an international zone. This was to be governed by a committee of control that were the diplomatic representatives of

the signatories of the Pact of Algeciras. It was my best preparation for the OAS, I'll put it that way.

We never fully recognized the French protectorate and therefore our man, the chief of our office, was called a Diplomatic Agent with the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary and Diplomatic Agent, as well as being Consul General. The others perhaps had personal ranks of Ambassador if they were important, or Minister, but they were simply Consuls General. We also retained our extraterritorial rights. This seems like a very un-American thing to do looked at this way, but it was precisely to protect those people and to not recognize the French protection over all of Morocco that we maintained. In other words, anybody that was an American citizen, or an American protected person, and that might be if they brought American businesses there.

Q: They were called prot#g#s, weren't they?

JOVA: Prot#g#s were subject to be tried by us in our own consular court. We had a special officer to do that who had legal training, and the Consul General perhaps might preside over it, but he would be the man preparing the case, accompanied by an old Englishman who had been there forever in that state. I can't give you his name right now, but someone who had been 30 years as our adviser. Many of the big Jewish families had that, but also many Muslim families were American protected persons.

The Committee of Control was like the Permanent Council of the OAS.

Q: Organization of American States.

JOVA: They in turn elected, or named, an administrator just as the Permanent Council or the Secretary General, who was the paid international administrator. In my day it was a Dutch person, at the end it was a Portuguese Minister. By tradition, or perhaps in the Pact of Algeciras, none of the principal powers could have that job, or the administrative jobs. Those were rotated or spread out among the other countries. The Portuguese handled

the public transportation; the Belgians the police; the Dutch had nothing because they had the administrator then. I forget who handled the customs. That was an international administration divvied up that way, and a paid administrator and these were paid functionaries. The Committee of Control was in effect the parliament. They controlled the administrator, and quarreled over prestige and everything else among themselves, and that was our chief...but we had to help prepare the papers and documentation for that.

The same members that were members of the Committee of Control changed their hats, and they were also the Board of Directors of the Golf Club of Tangier. They changed their hats once again and were the directors of the Diplomatic Beach, and there was also a so-called Diplomatic Forest. So, in other words, the diplomatic corps was very important there and sort of ran the place. But the business interests went on, and naturally there were trading companies, plus the fact that this was really the beginning of the Cold War. There was a fear that there might be a hot war, and many Europeans lived there, or had houses there, so they were ready to move there in case...

Q: Sort of an escape hole.

JOVA: Exactly. Some of the Spanish families had been there since the Spanish Civil War, the same way. Big families bought houses so they came and went because the climate was nice, but you found French, Belgians, the British. So there was an important social life going on also.

Q: It had a reputation, at least later, of being one of the most dissolute social upper classes.

JOVA: I guess there was some of that. There was a Belgian count, and his wife who was half American and half British, on the dissolute side. She had a boyfriend. These two men who weren't interested in women, I thought, but apparently with the Countess they could

get it up for her. I should scrub that out. And there was drug taking which in those days nobody would have thought of, it just seemed so horrible.

I remember when I was in the Navy in Panama, the fact that they had captured drugs, etc., our police, the American police burning, seems unimaginable that anybody one knew might take it. Well, band leaders, jazz bands—at Dartmouth, I remember when they'd come up, oh! they were supposed to have taken cigarettes or something.

Q: Marijuana.

JOVA: It was a wonderful place to raise children because you could get anything, powdered milk, anything you wanted of that sort, because it was a free port. I'd say that most of those families weren't that way, they were rather stuff-collar, old aristocracy types. But I think the fringes of that, like the people that ran bars, were perhaps more disciplined.

Q: And I think this attracted more attention proportionately to what people think of Tangier.

JOVA: Probably they think of that. Socially, it was largely among the diplomatic community, and the big families, or the guys behind the bar. There were a few big families that one saw, but the French frowned on that a lot, and one had to be careful. And, of course, we, the U.S., were very interested in the independence movements. It was particularly important because many of the political exiles from Algeria, from Tunis, they were still French, and from Morocco itself, were there in the international zone. At the risk of offending the French who were easily offended, and had their big intelligence services, one had to see. This was one of our duties. And, of course, I, speaking Spanish, also started to take care of the Spanish zone that had always been looked down on by the rest of the Legation friends. Traditionally they didn't do very much there in the Spanish zone. The Minister himself was married to a French woman. Their idea was the traditional things were for the French things. That meant a good terrain to cultivate for a very young person. You could make it your own thing for political reporting. Lots of things were going on in the Spanish zone too because they had an independence movement, and it was very

interesting to compare the way they ran things, as they had less money than the French. Spain was very poor at that time because, don't forget, that it was not blockaded, but by sanction by the United Nations and sort of cut off from imports or anything for a few years after the war. The Spanish people were poorer after the war than they were during the war as far as coffee and foodstuffs due to the blockade.

Q: They were sort of a pariah because Franco was...

JOVA: ...and oil and all that stuff were cut off because of Franco. So it made for interesting reporting, and then, again, the lessons in Arabic made a wonderful channel to meet some of these people, or to find out what was going on. I had a very nice young man who taught me Arabic. Years later when I was stationed here in Washington he came on one of those U.S. leader grants, and he came to have dinner with us. He was the governor of Tangier. So, in other words, I guess I had a good idea of a future leader.

Q: In the first place I assume that you were basically a political reporting officer.

JOVA: Yes, I was. At first I was in the economic section for a short time but then I was in the political section.

Q: Dealing with both the Moroccan independence movement in the Spanish zone, and in the French zone, let's talk about the Spanish zone. Because this was a real backwater, and it didn't get its independence until somewhat later than the rest of Morocco. How did you find Spanish rule? And also dealing with the Moroccans under Spanish rule? What was your impression of this?

JOVA: They had the Sultan's representative in Tangier, and he was treated as an independent ruler by the Spanish, with considerable pomp. It was the important thing to go every Friday at 11:00, to see the little procession that took place when he went to do his weekly prayers at the mosque. The Moroccan band, notables...

Q: Petitions being presented?

JOVA: Petitions being presented. He had perhaps less power...this was Franco times, and the Spaniards were rather tough with their own people, let alone with the Moroccans. But, in general, it was perhaps more relaxed than with the more protocolary French, and the Spanish merchants and the people that were in the government, or were in the trading class. There was a fairly large population. I'd say they were more relaxed about their relationships with the Moroccans. And, of course, Spanish was the second language of that zone, and in fact it was the second language in Tangier. French was the official second language of Tangier, but Spanish was recognized as a language, and Spanish currency...the French franc was the official currency. In effect, you dealt in pesetas usually, and I think under the Pact, and under the regulations, the peseta. So while it was not the official, it had the power of paying debts and whatever you wanted in pesetas.

While we were there the Spanish thought for some reason they weren't getting their way enough, and Tangier suddenly was invaded by a hoard of ruffians, Moroccans from the Spanish zone that came in and demonstrated, and broke shop signs. The Spanish claimed this was just an independent thing, they had nothing to do with it. Now, more sophisticatedly, I recognize it probably wouldn't have happened, but it was directed that way to make sure that the Spanish voice was being listened to. They also were a little bit discriminated. The rest of us were trying to discriminate against them a little bit because during World War II they'd gone beyond the Spanish zone and they'd taken over the administration of Tangier themselves, and it had to be re- internationalized. And, of course, during that time the Germans and Italians also were way up there, they had special privileges. It has always been an important spying place, important traditionally because of its location on the Strait of Gibraltar.

But certainly there again was a wonderful opportunity, the fact that I was able to have more relationships with the Moroccans than most others in the Legation, and certainly to have the Spanish zone more or less to myself to report on. It was practically unknown. And

through my Arab teacher, and through the people I met that way, lots of things were of interest back in the Department.

Q: How did you find the staff of the Legation? This must have been a little more formal, you must have changed a bit after the free-wheeling bit, or not.

JOVA: Oh, definitely, it was like an embassy, or a Legation. But it was stratified, it wasn't even that small looking back at it. We had a full staff: economic, commercial, consular, political, and of course the legal people. The Minister, Mr. Plitt, was quite formal, and quite old school, a French wife also.

To sum it up, Tangier again was a wonderful opportunity. First, from a personal point of view. Our two children were born there. We arrived on Thanksgiving Day, and our first child was born prematurely on the 10th of January, but there was a little English hospital there with one doctor and some English nurses. Everybody was more primitive then, but we were lucky—born prematurely, no facilities, no incubators. The nearest thing to an incubator was an electric light bulb placed inside the cradle that he was in that gave a little bit of warmth. And the second one came a year and a half later, also born in Tangier.

Q: You were not quite the country cousin you would have been if you'd thought of Basra as being the...

JOVA: Exactly. And it was a place where I had to use my French again, as well as my Spanish. Of course, the Arabic I arrived with was a laugh. Every time I opened my mouth they would laugh because it was so different, spoken Arabic of Iraq from Egypt. Actually Basra was different than Baghdad. Anyway, my lessons were useful and with all the reporting opportunities that I mentioned, and the negotiating opportunities. So it was an unique thing for somebody on his second post.

Q: One last thing before we terminate this interview. Did you get any emanations from Washington of the problem, because it was just starting then, McCarthyism and its impact on the Foreign Service?

JOVA: Yes, we did. We lived through it because when Mr. Plitt left the next one was John Carter Vincent. Tangier had that wonderful thing, they could send somebody with the rank of Minister to be chief of post to head a Legation without needing Senate approval. Poor Ambassador Vincent, who had been in Switzerland, they had to get him out of there because of McCarthyism, and they placed him in Tangier. He was a person, again, that we learned a lot from, a very fine person.

Q: Would you explain a little about the problem with John Carter Vincent for somebody who wouldn't maybe...

JOVA: If I recall rightly, he had been a China hand, and therefore anybody that had been a China hand was considered to have participated in giving up China to the Soviet Union. He was a liberal, or thought to be a liberal. His wife was very liberal and outspoken in that fuzzy way that sometimes women are apt to be, but for an ambassador's wife, or a minister's wife...and, of course, when you're getting into trouble all you do is get into more trouble. She would open her mouth, and she'd help him get into trouble. I can't remember the circumstances but in his overcoat or something they found Russian notes. It turned out that he was studying Russian, or being tutored in Russian. That again was something that was held against him later, and I guess they moved him out because the pressures were too great.

But while he was there, he was very nice and a very skilled Foreign Service person. A little bit dumbfounded. He was a little bit off-balance because of what was happening to him but he was trying to do his job in this other area, and this limited scene of Tangier. As I say, I had a nice impression of him, and I felt sorry for him. But he did look for it you see, he did do some things like studying Russian just at the moment when he shouldn't have

been. And his wife was sounding off just when she shouldn't have been. Then, of course, they were looking for anybody that was out for trouble. They were already starting the campaign against gays, homosexuals. So there was McCarthyism there.

Q: Did you have the feeling that, "Gee, this is the time to keep one's head down." Was this the ethos of the time, or as a young officer basically this was passing over your head?

JOVA: It was passing over your head but I think you had to be careful. One would have been foolish not to watch what one was reporting, putting the proper caveats in to make sure it was an all-American point of view. But it was a very educational time, and it was also a very gratifying time. I look on that as one of the happy posts, with a nice mix of adventure; because in Morocco we would take trips, and it really was an adventure in those days. And also of reporting opportunities, and contacts both with the Arabs of various countries, and from Morocco, and also with more sophisticated Europeans. I mean our colleagues in the other Consulates General—they weren't Legations, we were the only Legation. And, of course, we were small but we would occasionally see our colleagues from Rabat. That was only a Consulate but was already quite important—there's where the French Resident General was. And Casablanca which was already a big commercially oriented post, so we saw some of those. And, of course, they'd have regional conferences. I remember going twice to Madrid to participate in regional consular conferences, and then a regional political officers conference.

And it's true that you could see Spain from our window, and we could go from time to time. That was on my list as number one for my "wish list," and once again it didn't happen but somebody kindly said, "We don't have anything in Spain but we do have something nice, Oporto, Portugal where you can be near Spain and also you can be chief of post. You did it in an acting manner in Basra and now you can be your own chief of post." But that's another story that we'll talk about later.

Q: Excellent.

Q: Today is October 24th, 1991. This is the second interview with Ambassador Joseph John Jova. John, we left off last time in 1952. You had been in Tangier and they had found a place for you. Although you wanted to go to Spain, they said, "How about Oporto?" which sounds like a pretty good second choice. What were you doing in Oporto, and what was the situation as you saw Portugal at that time from your perspective?

JOVA: Oporto is certainly a general purpose post, two officers and one American secretary, and several locals—some of them had been there a long time and were very good, others not so good but most of them were very good. It was a very interesting assignment. This isn't all bull shit when I tell the FSOs being sworn in, and I think you should really tell them the truth when I say, "There is no such thing as a bad assignment." I've told you about Basra.

Q: Yes, that sounded like the post from hell.

JOVA: Just from the Post Report, and it certainly was a tough place but certainly couldn't have had more gratifications professionally. Portugal, believe it or not, turned out to be a little bit the same way.

First of all, Oporto is the second city in Portugal. Its also where some of the industrial—such as it is—but there's industry up there, plus the wine industry which is separate and very genteel, but very nice. Plus in those days they had a more active labor movement up there, and also the more active part of the opposition. On the other side of the political spectrum, also very strong, monarchist movement existed there. And as a matter of fact, the pretender to the throne had been permitted back in just about the time we got there, with the proviso that he should reside in the north. So he resided in our consular district.

I still get letters from the local staff after all that time, Christmas cards. And all that time since then every time I've gotten a promotion or anything of that sort, I would get a cable or a letter, or letters, from that local staff that stayed there, which is a very nice thing.

Q: That's a very nice thing.

JOVA: Besides that, the big source of immigration had always been in the north of Portugal more than the south and, of course the Azores are very big so the consular part was busy. There was political reporting to do, there was commercial and economic reporting to do, and then there was consular work to do. There was representation also, a little bit, a different country which is true for so many consular districts. It is a different country with a different outlook, and important because a good part of the population are up there, and so much more dynamic than the south which is agricultural. Mind you, this is agriculture too but in a different way, much more mixed.

All I can tell you is I found it very interesting. There was actually a let-down later on when I was transferred to Lisbon as a reward, but we'll come to that later.

Q: You mentioned that the pretender was there, and the opposition. I thought Salazar ran a pretty tight ship. We're talking about '52 to '54.

JOVA: Yes, but all those things existed.

Q: Were you under any constraints as far as whom you could talk to, and as far as either orders from the Embassy, or just generally that you had to be careful about contacting the opposition?

JOVA: No, but common sense also told you, don't overdo it. If you go to an opposition rally, just sit still, act as if you're being the one that's buying the hot dogs and bringing them up to the speakers. And they did have the secret police, international and secret police combined the two functions. I remember there was a very dynamic, quite young, officer in charge of that, and I wouldn't have liked to tangle with him knowing we had relationships. There was a great deal of that sort of thing, of representation, of relationships with all the authorities which is in the primate. The man was important, the military governor was important, the civil governor, of course, was important. The Primate

of all of Portugal was in the consular district. So from an ecclesiastical point of view it was important.

All I can tell you when I went to Lisbon...I'll say it now when we're talking about consulates because I've always been against closing them arbitrarily. Sometimes it is merely just to show a statistic, to say, “We've saved some money.” But in Oporto we had access to everybody from the top down. In Lisbon people weren't interested in a second secretary of embassy. I became a first secretary there. So you had to work to make contacts. They were interested in the ambassador, the DCM, or Ted Xanthaky who was a very famous Foreign Service person who was an FSS who had had only two posts in his life. One was Rio de Janeiro, and he married a Brazilian, or I think she was an Argentine actually, but of importance there. And then he was transferred to Lisbon and spent the rest of his career there. In other words, he spent 40 years, so he knew everybody, but just of the right people; no opposition for him; and access to Salazar and then had access to some of the big banking families that were his idol. So he was a very important person who in effect, in many ways, overshadowed the political section. Not only that, I'd say he overshadowed the DCM and the ambassador himself in many ways. But on the other hand, it also shows that with a little bit of gumption you can still find, even in a situation like what Lisbon was later, you can still find interesting things to report on, and contacts to make.

No, there were no overt challenge as regards to seeing members of the opposition. On the other hand, I wouldn't go to the home of a known communist, or semi-communist.

Q: Did you find the embassy was interested in what you were reporting? Were you doing your thing, and they were doing their thing?

JOVA: The embassy was interested; interested enough that they saw enough of it; that they invited me when my term was up, the ambassador invited me to go down there, and that was at the recommendation of his staff.

Q: Who was the ambassador part of the time?

JOVA: The first part of the time that I was there, it was Cavendish Cannon, who was a career person, a wonderful person, and really an Eastern European specialist. He was married to an Eastern European—his wife was Austrian, a difficult woman, we'll come to that later. And the second part of my time, it was M. Robert Guggenheim. During those two I was up in the north, and I can't give you the exact progression. That was night and day, of course, compared to Ambassador Cannon, or compared to his wife because Mrs. Guggenheim was a very lovely person. We still see her here, and still friendly; still good looking and very nice, and was helpful to me at Meridian House on fund raising. But he was a dreadful person. I mean they had to throw him out because there was harassment.

Q: There were some rather famous hearings in the last week over a Supreme Court Justice Thomas, and about was there, or was there not, a case of sexual harassment.

JOVA: He was the Mr. Harassment, chased the secretaries around, even very pallid old maid looking secretaries, and he chased them around the desk. He made passes at the Portuguese, and you know they are so prim. Even on his visit to us—I think he visited once or maybe twice in Oporto, and we gave a nice dinner party and had the authorities, and what to my horror to see him reach over to the wife of the military commander, who was rather a prim lady, gray-haired, pointed a fountain pen and said, “Excuse me madam, something is falling out.” This was in Oporto where its even more prim, more Edwardian. In Lisbon, of course, he dropped a little coffee spoon down the bosom of the wife of the Foreign Minister, who was very beautiful, and said, “Excuse madam, can I rescue that?” And that was when the cup overflowed, and they asked through another agency...the Portuguese after all had been in the business a long time, I think it was through the military mission back here, they didn't want to go through the State Department with the request that he be removed.

We were insulated from that being up in Oporto except for his visits, and hearing the tales. Ambassador Cannon asked us to go down to fortify his staff. By the time we got there he had been transferred to Yugoslavia. That was a blow to his wife who told somebody afterwards, “You brought the news that destroyed my life.” She loved Lisbon so much. She was a tyrant and sort of a bully, and stingy as hell, but still had nice qualities. It is possible. But she specialized in the bridge playing set, and in the royalists because there was a whole lot of royalty exiled there.

In any case, yes, the embassy must have liked the reporting enough so they asked me to go down there. And also, I'd say perhaps a little bit of competition is good too for their political section which was dormant; to hear something coming out of the north when things are apt to happen further away from the center of power, yet important otherwise.

Q: You were at our embassy in Lisbon from 1954 to 1957. What were you doing there?

JOVA: I was head of the political section. Our major binational problem there, of course, was renewal of the bases agreement, the Azores bases. You know how those things are, you don't finish one round and then you're already preparing for the next round. They're still there anyway. And Xanthaky was a great help to the ambassador on that. I could give support, but the rest of it was political reporting, biographic reporting, the usual things that a political section does. But I found it dull, except Lisbon was such a lovely city, and it was a nice embassy, and by that time we had a different ambassador, Ambassador Bonbright, who also was a wonderful mentor, and he was really the ambassador all the time I was in Lisbon. He was a pleasure to work with, and had a difficult wife also who was nice but had a drinking problem, but was an artist of considerable talent. Later on they went from there to Sweden, which I think they liked, and in some ways that was probably a better ambiance for somebody who was himself somewhat New England, upstate New York actually, but of good family, not effusive, and his wife, I think, was probably better off there too in that cold climate.

All these things are wonderful preparations for your future life. Certainly the years later when I was Charg# for a long time in Chile, and when I became Ambassador in Honduras, and after that OAS, and Mexico. The experience that I had as acting chief of post in Basra, then as chief of post in Oporto, stood me in very good stead, and polished a way to handle yourself, and particularly in those posts, and particularly Portugal that was very old fashioned protocol-wise, seeing all those little nonsense things that mean something, calling, leaving, dinner parties. They had their own protocol. The first time we went to a big dinner party, I saw everyone got up from the table, and everybody was shaking hands with the hostess. I thought, “Oh, maybe we're not going to get coffee,” here we go. It turned out no, that was the custom, that everybody thanks the hostess, getting up from the table, shakes hands, and thanks her for the lovely meal, but then you go in and have the coffee, or the brandy, and stay for as long as necessary. That was a revelation.

When we left it was like a public manifestation after all the goodbyes. We went on the Silver Bullet, the express train. The whole baggage car was filled with flowers, everybody was there at the station to see us off, including the governor. We arrived in Lisbon in the dark, there was nobody in that station. Eventually I found an old broken down station wagon with a sleeping driver in it with diplomatic plates. That was the embassy car sent to meet us. That was one of the things that I think makes our Service so good, and prepares you for everything.

Q: And tears you down.

JOVA: ...so you don't lose your sense of respect.

Q: When you were in Lisbon obviously the Azores were a prime concern. This was certainly at the height of the cold war, and the Azores continue to be a major element in our European and Middle Eastern strategy. What were our interests other than the Azores in Portugal, and how did we view Salazar, who after all did have a dictatorial regime—or would you call it a dictatorial regime? Autocratic regime?

JOVA: Autocratic, and I guess it had to be at one time or another. He was an unusual person, an intellectual, an academic, a professor.

Q: Economics.

JOVA: Economics. Mind you, his economics was rather old fashioned but still he believed like the good housewives of New England, put your little egg money in the tin box, and take it out of the tin box but you never spend what you haven't put in already. So perhaps that wasn't the right ticket for growth, but he kept inflation down, it was growing well. I mean not spectacular, but well. There were big inequities between the rich and the poor, but we went back a few years ago and I found the same thing, but much more run down after the years of being almost semi-communist, and now its just a liberal republic in its advancement. The highway was still the same highway between Oporto and Lisbon, the two major cities, and it was still the same winding two-lane highway. If you get behind a truck, or if you get behind some oxen with their big horns, you were stuck for a long time. They built a new bridge here and there and widened it a little bit, but it was still the same thing. So that gives you the feeling of what it was. I gather now with the prosperity of Europe, and Portugal coming into the Common Market, that's different and it's more hustling.

There were American investments, we will have an AID program there, for instance. And there were American private investors, in oil, and in a tire factory. But it was important to us also because it owns such a big hunk of Africa. It owned Angola, Mozambique, Portuguese Guinea, and the Cape Verde Islands. So that made it important to us.

The other thing that kept us very busy was the Goa dispute. India had a claim to Goa, you recall, and of course we being stationed in Portugal—we all get clientitis even though you sympathize with India. Then also, don't forget the chiefs of mission there were really EUR hands, and therefore each time that would come up at the United Nations, for instance, that would be a big campaign with the Portuguese, and us helping them, and pressing

Washington, and it was all to a sigh of relief if the U.S. voted the right way. And when somebody said Goa is Portuguese, and that nobody can deny, (I believe Mr. Dulles said that) we made it like a little song, “nobody can deny.”

The African territories, those independence movements hadn't really started then so that was interesting. We already had a consulate in Angola, and one in Lourenco Marques—a Consulate General probably, and there were independence movements. And the Indians just eventually got tired with the United Nations thing, and they would have won later on because it became open to so many third world countries, but just marched in and took it peacefully, and I guess the Indonesians did the same thing in East Timor. And Macau was always watched because that was near Hong Kong and it joined China which at that point was a real red devil to the United States. This was long before our opening, and people's careers, as you mentioned the other day, had been lost to that. I guess the big fear was that it would get even closer to the Soviet Union, but the Soviet Union, I think, was considered civilized, and well behaved compared to Red China. So Portugal for all those reasons had geopolitical importance to us.

Q: Were we at that time looking beyond Salazar? I mean as a practical thing rather comfortable with Salazar there?

JOVA: I think we were rather comfortable with Salazar. The U.S. had so many things to worry about all over the world that I think it was comfortable with Salazar. He was no easy target. He was difficult to negotiate with, with his austerity, and wasn't giving anything away. The U.S. usually ended up getting what it wanted on major things, but we also had to give, for instance, Goa. Many people, I'm sure, felt that India should have it. It was really part of India and should go back, and we were against colonialism, but they had to weigh those two things and later on when I was in the Department I had to continue preaching the fact that you have to see it from both sides.

And, of course, sometimes our demands seem almost frivolous to the Portuguese. For instance in regard to the Azores, one thing was to have a naval base there. I remember a big debating point was the Defense Department wanted a golf course there. Well, in a place where sociological histories have been written—studies have been written and are still, about the cost of tenancy in the Azores and actually in northern Portugal too because land is so precious, and the thought of giving up land, even if it was bought to build a golf course, horrified the Portuguese. I guess we got it eventually but it just seemed to me there were other ways that our men could have had their exercise in a place like the Azores rather than take up a lot of agriculture land for a golf course.

Q: With these Azores negotiations, I've talked to other people who have been involved in them, and although the Portuguese were hard bargainers, the real problem was, as you've alluded to, was often our military that really didn't seem to have, at least from Washington, any sensitivity to the real problems of the place. They just wanted to get everything they could. I mean, this was somebody else's country.

JOVA: Greed, more privileges for more people, they're more important than anything else.

Q: So you found to negotiate with the Department of Defense, particularly the lawyers, was part of it.

JOVA: That was part of it. Yes, in a way we had to persuade the Portuguese, we had to be the brokers with them and with the different clients at home in the U.S. It was part of NATO right from the beginning, so we had an important mission—a MAAG, Military Advisory Group, much bigger than the aid. The aid got liquidated at the end of my stay, but it had contributed to a little resumption of world proportion, but the military was very important. I know that also caused difficulty for the ambassadors, and it continued to after the difficulty—the kitchen was here, the kitchen to all that little gossip stuff, but who is Mr. United States, and who is Mrs. United States? We had a vigorous military general's wife, and lots of times they'd be giving away more than the embassy would.

Q: One of the problems, particularly in that era, there were some countries—you might say State Department countries, other countries that were A.I.D. countries, other countries military countries, and some countries were CIA countries.

JOVA: That's right.

Q: ...where one of these other agencies would predominate, and there at least it was a battle between the military and the State Department contingent.

JOVA: Right. USIA was very calm, very supportive. CIA was a very small office, and not particularly effective or efficient. After that I was told by a CIA colleague, “Oh, but you're judging it from your experience in Iraq where we were just beginning, and then it Portugal where it was a semi-dominant state. We're much better than that.” Well, I must say, that colored a little bit my opinion of CIA, and Iraq where our CIA station chief was saying, “There's no such thing as a Russian threat here in Iraq. Its too far from them, they've got all the oil they can use, they have more of it than they can use, they'll never come here.” Of course, he was very wrong.

Q: How did you and the others at the embassy look upon Portugal and NATO? I mean one always has to remind one's self even today that Portugal is part of NATO.

JOVA: So is Denmark.

Q: Was this just a pay-off to keep them under our wing or something like that?

JOVA: Perhaps. It probably would have been more trouble than it was worth when actual hostilities started. But on the other hand, they have the geography. They have not only those islands but the Cape Verde Islands. They had Madeira, they had a piece of Atlantic Littoral, and they had obligations, both naval and military, that were assigned to NATO to be called upon if needed. So it probably was a good thing.

Q: From a geographic point of view.

JOVA: Geographic, and also an educational sort of thing. It brought the military and naval people more and more up to date, and they could contribute something. But their navy, I remember, was very little. When the President went to call on the Queen of England, they insisted on going in a Portuguese naval vessel. Well, the naval vessel was perhaps a frigate, perhaps even less, and by the time you got the President and his wife, and his staff, on this little ship, and it was very rough weather, it was really pitiful to see them going out to sea. Maybe now they have changed, maybe now they go on a Portuguese airline, or a Portuguese merchant marine vessel. But at that time dignity demanded that they go on a man-of-war.

Q: You left there in 1957. I take it there were no major events in Portugal in that period from '52 to '57.

JOVA: Goa. The relations were no difficulty, and the Azores, and occasionally some business of an opposition person being arrested or something of that sort. As I recall, the opposition by that time was pretty well cowed, and certainly the ones in Lisbon were apt to be elderly gentlemen with white beards, and intellectuals, and they were permitted. They were permitted to publish a paper which I used to try to read but it was the most boring newspaper of all. Perhaps that's why they let it be published, it was a 1912 type newspaper.

Q: You then came back in 1957 where you served for just about a year, or part of a year, on the Iberian desk.

JOVA: France-Iberia. People who don't see it in writing say, “What a funny combination, France and Siberia.”

Q: What were you doing there?

JOVA: I was the so-called officer in charge. They don't have that title anymore.

Q: Of France and...

JOVA: France, Spain and Portugal. So I must have done all right because...

Q: Yes, I'm surprised they allowed anybody who had not served in France even close to that.

JOVA: Exactly. And I certainly was handicapped though, to be very honest with you. I was handicapped by not having served in France because that was the bulk of our work. But Spain was also active and I knew a lot about Spain. While I served there in Portugal, except for the Azores and Goa, it was the minimal part of our work. It was an education really because I had never served in the Department before. This was '57, well, ten years, it doesn't seem like it. At that time it seemed forever, and now this doesn't happen. But, of course, this is one of the things that was the reform of the Service. They tried to eliminate people that served too long abroad. Before that some people would do their entire careers with perhaps one assignment in the Department, or none. So it was a wonderful experience finding out how the Department works.

Q: While you were there what were the major events, or situations that you had to deal with?

JOVA: Algerian independence, the push that was independence, and that affected our relations with Tunis also because they in effect were the spokesmen. They already were independent, and they would be the spokesmen in many ways for the independence movement of Algeria. And there was always that business “did we receive them or not, did the Secretary, or who receives them?” I remember Bill Tyler, who was Deputy Assistant Secretary, when the French would get too excited he would quote, I think, Talleyrand. “As your own Talleyrand would say, a ministry is like a cathedral. Anyone is free to enter and pray.” That would a little bit disarm the French who were under instructions obviously to be

very strong with us about it. And the whole internal French policy; we had to follow it very closely because they were changing...

Q: ...it was more than bureaucratic. A policy battle was going on at this time and that was the Battle of Algeria between the African interests because this is the beginning of the change in Africa and Europe, but particularly the European Bureau whose main concern was NATO and the defense of Europe. You had been outside of this, and you'd obviously been in Iraq and Tangier...

JOVA: And Morocco, right.

Q: You came at it from both sides and yet here you were as being sort of the point of the spear of the EUR battle against those perfidious anti-colonial types who were going to screw up NATO. Was this a problem for you?

JOVA: Not with EUR. You were defending the European point of view against the barefoots that we used to call the AFs.

Q: ...the barefoots.

JOVA: And in those days the EURs were probably still better, and also had more influence because of the NATO obligations, and the way the administration was slanted, and the way Mr. Dulles felt as the then Secretary of State. The cards in the EUR hands were bigger cards, and they were more apt to win and the sympathy for independence had to be in the other departments. But one couldn't help personally being sympathetic with them, or at least seeing it in a longer term perspective. But then I learned how a Presbyterian minister can lie because I heard Mr. Dulles in the same day say completely different things to the ambassador of Tunis and the ambassador of France.

The amount of cable traffic that we got was enormous, and it was truly a back breaking job. Certainly Saturday morning you were there until 1:00 or 2:00 o'clock, and frequently

Sunday also and evenings. A lot concerned other parts of the world because after all, we had the info copies, or sometimes the action copies, but everything from North Africa, everything on Vietnam, Laos, because France's interests were worldwide, so we had an awful lot to do. It was a wonderful experience but then I was chosen to go to the Senior Seminar and I was rather disappointed to leave something that was exciting. But I was told how important this was, the very fact that it was new, was unknown.

Q: The State Department's answer to the War College.

JOVA: And actually it turned out that the armed forces people had already been to the War College in some cases. So I left there, not before having done an inspection of France. I was on loan also to USIA to participate in an evaluation team of USIA activities in France. That again was a wonderful experience, I mean, to go back to France where I had been...don't forget that I'd spent three years there during the war so I had some feel for language and the cast of characters—lots of them were the same. I was the State Department's representative, there was a public member, and a USIA member. We spent a good month not only there on the exchange of persons program; there were the propaganda efforts; the libraries; and at a time when they were cutting back also, which was very important. But also this gave me an opportunity to go to Algeria, which I did. I was the only one that went, I think we split up a couple of the consulates. I went to Algeria and then persuaded them that once I'm going there I really should get a better feel for it and go to Tunis also, because I knew Morocco. So that was a very interesting thing evaluating those two countries for the USIA point of view, but also seeing the independence situation. It was a little bit scary because we were increasingly close to independence and I don't know how long more it took. While I was in that position de Gaulle came back in.

Q: He was called back to power, yes.

JOVA: To go back to Algeria, to eat in a restaurant or something, you didn't know whether they were going to roll a little bomb. But we had nice colleagues, they took us out so we did eat in restaurants, and did a lot of other things on a three day visit, and the same way in Tunis. David McKillop was the DCM, you recall that he'd been the principal officer in Basra, so that was nice.

From there I went back to Marseille to look at the public affairs part, and I stayed with, again, a man who had been my supervisor, Clifton Wharton. He had been the Consul General in Portugal, and we were friends from then and I stayed with him and his dear wife Leone. And while I was there they got the word that he was named Ambassador to Norway—excuse me, first he went to an Eastern European capital, and then to Norway afterwards, Romania perhaps. He, you know, was black, very intelligent, a wonderful person. When he went to Romania as Minister, that was a big thing, and then two or three years later he went to Scandinavia, and it was very well deserved. He died very recently and was honored in absentia at the last meeting of the Foreign Service [Association].

Q: Were you dealing with French Algerian affairs at the time when Kennedy made his probably one utterance as Senator about international affairs which concerned siding basically with Algerian independence? Or did that happen before?

JOVA: I don't know if I was there, but I remember that utterance. Of course, many Senators were sounding off that way, and the U.S. people were going more and more towards independence. It was coming sooner or later. And mind you, when they brought back de Gaulle, that frightened everybody. It was touch and go what would happen. One of my colleagues said, “John, you served in Portugal, and you're familiar with Spain, what do you think of this?” I said, “Looking at both those cases, it's one thing to get on the horse, and it's another thing to get off the horse. So it will be more difficult to change this later on for the French, or for the man himself. Sometimes they can't do it even if they want to, the individual.” And that's what almost cost him his life when he tried to solve the Algerian thing, and give it independence ...some of the French military themselves, the

Day of the Jackal. But he did a wonderful thing for France because before that, as I say, they used to have a new Prime Minister every few months.

Q: That was one year, and then you came out and you went to Personnel. What were you doing in Personnel? You were there from '59 to '61.

JOVA: Right. When I left Portugal, Personnel wanted me for a job—not the job I got later on, because Aaron Brown, who had been the DCM in Portugal under whom I served, had just become Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Personnel, and he wanted me to go there. At that time I said, “Oh, please, no. I don't want it, I'd like to do something else. This will be my first service in the Department and I really think it ought to be something...I don't know the Service,” which was quite true. He was going to release me, and that's how the European Bureau had asked for me. Of course, I guess I already knew that I was asked for. So I said no to him once. When I got out of the Senior Seminar, which again was a wonderful education for me. Here I was a person that had gone to college, of course a long time before, but after that I had been stuck out in the boonies for three years plus in Guatemala, then after that the war and it's true that I was in France at the end, then Basra, Morocco, Oporto, Lisbon—you're really out of the big loop. By the time you got the New York papers they were two weeks old, or three weeks, or a month old, you weren't keeping in touch with things. So truly I needed to be educated, and it was a very good, healthy thing for me to bring me up-to-date with what was what in American civilization, inside of the United States and what was going on politically, socially. I was quite naive. So I take my hat off and recognize that I didn't want to go, but this was the right thing for me.

When I got out Aaron Brown said, “Look, you escaped before, now you have an obligation because all of us in the Service...I don't belong to this either. I never thought I'd end up doing administrative personnel work. But all of us have an obligation to make the Service run well.” Don't forget this was right after Wristonization.

Q: Oh, yes. I had my two years in Personnel too.

JOVA: And it was an education.

Q: Absolutely.

JOVA: I went in as deputy chief of the Personnel operations division, which in effect was Personnel. As we know, it was much bigger but a lot of the other stuff really was bureaucratic, things like retirement.

Q: But assignments really.

JOVA: This was assignments, and both for Foreign Service and Civil Service, which managed itself but this is what we were trying to overcome, bring them more in to us, and bring us more into it, and, of course, the Civil Service Commission didn't like that either. They thought it was awful. Here's somebody who had just been serving as a political officer all over obscure parts of the world, now comes to be deputy, and he's never been a “journeyman personnel officer,” which was the title I had. I said, “No, but I'll do my best.” There again, at the end of a year or so, my chief was transferred to the field—his time was up—and they were searching for somebody else to replace him and no one came to mind at once, and Mr. Henderson then asked me to take that.

Q: This is Loy Henderson.

JOVA: Loy Henderson...to move up. I'd been acting in that position for several months, and they made me Chief of Personnel Operations, and the assignment process was a big thing. And there is where I learned what the Service is, where I learned the cast of characters, and where I learned the psychology of the human being—men and women.

Q: How did you view the system at the time, the Personnel system, because assignments are the life blood of the Foreign Service.

JOVA: Well, it was as cumbersome, as the inventor of the gear shift said, it's brutal but it works. That was true, it did seem cumbersome, and old fashioned. That was what some of the management people said. This is being done in an old fashioned way around a table where each one comes in for the twice a week meetings. They have two obligations, to fill the vacancies in his area; and to auction off the human beings into the world that were up for sale, or for rent, or assignments. But it worked, and people tell me it worked better then than it has since with all these changes that they made and improvement, but also partly, I think, it's the Service itself that has changed. The Foreign Service Association, and the 'young Turks," had the bitter experience of learning eventually that the "young Turks" of today are the old Turks of tomorrow, and then you see things in a different light.

But, for instance, I think it's terrible that desk officers divide up the four year tour in Washington. I see that nobody wants to stay in the same job particularly. Somebody has to do the drearier, dingier jobs, while the desk officers, let's say, are the more glamorous ones. But those desks are in turmoil always. How they manage it I don't know. The assignments are just less than two years.

For instance, the Mexico desk that I have followed fairly closely, or up until recently, and the press of work being such, that everybody thinks that Mexico began on the day that they sat at that desk. They don't know anything about what went on before. That must be true all over the Department. So that must put us in a terrible disadvantage with the other agencies. CIA, for instance, where their people stay forever. As you pointed out earlier, when we talk about the dichotomy of our position in let's say, Portugal, that we had to defend not only U.S. interests with the Portuguese, but we also had to defend what we thought were State Department, or our country's interests, with our own military, and our own other agencies. That puts us at a disadvantage I should think. And certainly puts us at a disadvantage in dealing with the people from the other countries because they also have experts usually dealing with the USA.

Q: How did you find the geographic bureaus? One always thinks of these—each of the major geographic bureaus—like a little dukedom which has its own personnel. They know what assignments they want to make from within theirs. Were you going with your lance against these various groups?

JOVA: The big fights we had with the bureaus (and eventually I was part of the fights that we will come to later). The Personnel Panel in our own department—it was broken up geographically, as well as functionally, and whoever was representing the Near East had to get along with the Executive Officer of the Near East Division, or the African Division, or the European Division; or they had to explain why they couldn't get the man; or why they couldn't get rid of somebody; or they had a vacancy they couldn't fill. And, of course, attempts have been made to overcome this. I think it probably is better now, whether it is better for the U.S. or not, I don't know.

Q: GLOP, it was basically everybody should serve in different areas.

JOVA: Which I think is good. Mind you, we've also seen people that have been stars in Europe and have fallen on their faces in Latin America, or Africa, or vice versa.

Q: I think the word today is sensitivity, was not high on our agenda. I'm thinking particularly in terms of sex as far as giving females more of an opportunity to serve elsewhere, and also with minorities, especially blacks at the time. How did it strike you at the time, and what were we working on?

JOVA: This had already been “discovered.” There was already a push to get more blacks, and to get more Hispanics, who were handicapped because so few applied; and to send people to the southwest to speak at the colleges; and to try to get more of them to take the test. And the same way with women who have been more integrated. I think we did everything that was possible then, and certainly on women we were taking the lead. There were some things that were unfair with the spousal arrangements, that even those that

belonged, that were already in the Service, couldn't take their husbands. Of if they married they would be asked to resign; or it was automatic; or they knew they had to resign; or if not, they wouldn't get their husband's fare paid to India, or wherever it was. I think we fought a very good fight for that, and helped. I think we started what everybody said was impossible, and were very opposed to it, the team assignments.

Q: Yes, dual assignments.

JOVA: The husband and wife, to at least make an effort to have them both work in the same embassy, not one over the other, of course, or, if not, at least in adjoining countries, or adjoining posts. So I think we began the process of enlightenment and we had great battles also with the medical division. There are many unfair things about health problems, and not permitting this person or that person to serve abroad. I can look back with pride on what was done in those fields.

Q: Where did some of the initiative come for this greater sensitivity towards minority rights, and women's rights, would you say? Was this coming from the top?

JOVA: I think we were creatures of the day then, but it was coming from outside somewhat, you could either resist that, or go along with it. In some cases we had to resist it because of the unrealistic demands (and they continue to be). But in other cases we could go along with them, I think take a lead in it. And I'm proud to say, that for instance in Mexico—and I don't get any credit for it—but I took the lead in something that hadn't been invented before—the employment of spouses, because that we had resisted. You could employ a foreigner but you couldn't employ an American citizen in the country, and a spouse even less. And we did it. We finally got permission, and we were opposed by I don't know how many people, including the Consular Association: “Oh, but that is demeaning to our function, if you put those spouses working as visa spouses, with college degrees, with working experience, and they are going to do it only for the busy season. We don't have the personnel from home to come here and do it. We don't have the personnel

in the embassy. This is the solution." But it made some people unhappy, but certainly helped the U.S. Government do its work, and it was good for the individuals. And now it's a regular thing all over. I think it's terrible to have the DCM's wife running the cafeteria, it seems to me she has other duties; to help the ambassador.

Q: John, we've finished your time in Personnel from 1959 to '61. Let's talk about Africa.

JOVA: Well, in 1960 the African countries were just becoming independent. Suddenly a whole batch of them were independent. This was the end of '60, the election was already over. Kennedy had won the election, but I suppose they wanted to make points for the Republicans, and for Eisenhower, and hoped to make decisions at once. They sent a special mission headed by Mr. Loy Henderson, who was the Under Secretary for Administration, and put at his disposal Air Force #2, the Vice Presidential plane. I was lucky enough to be part of his team as Director of Personnel Operations; and the head of the Medical Division of the Department of State, Dr. DeVault; the head of the FBO, Foreign Buildings; the appropriate regional CIA man; the Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs; and somebody from each of the Armed Services. John Stutesman was Mr. Henderson's right hand man.

The whole idea was that this would be a self-contained unit able to make decisions on the spot. Actually, the forms were observed. The telegrams would go back proposing, but in effect what Mr. Henderson and his team proposed, was usually taken for granted. It was accepted, deciding whether to open an embassy, or not, how big a staff there should be, what buildings we should acquire, what sort of staff.

The whole idea at first was not to have an embassy in each country, but to have perhaps consulates, and then regional embassies with ambassadors posted to more than one country—the ambassadors posted there accredited to more than one country. Even before we left it started to become clear that this is not what the Africans wanted. They each wanted their own embassy. This is really the sign of independence to have an American

embassy. But as a first step, and before hitting Africa, Mr. Henderson decided it would be appropriate to go to sit at the feet and consult President Tubman of Liberia as one of the elder statesmen of Africa, and he was in a sanitarium in Zurich at that moment. So our first stop was Zurich, and the little people did not see President Tubman but Mr. Henderson did, and perhaps the African Bureau man. His conversations confirmed that it would not fly. Reasonable as it sounded, economical as it sounded, it would not fly, not to have embassies in these new states. That they should have them, and would have them. So that was the first recommendation.

Q: I might add that we're going to go through that right now in the fall of 1991 with the breakup of the Soviet empire. We're making the same noises about regional embassies, and you know, that's not going to fly.

JOVA: Probably not. It certainly didn't in Africa. But this was a wonderful experience. I think we hit 22 countries in 42 days. We never would have been able to do it unless we had our own plane. Here was a plane with sleeping arrangements on it, a wonderful chef, and stocked with steaks, and delicious food, a full bar. So it was really the way to go. It was hard work because you would have to hit the ground running and at once fan out, some on protocol, others going to see buildings, or hospital facilities. So it was an education. In some places we already had embassies or Consuls General that were able to become embassies. In other places we had nothing at all. At one place we were lucky to buy a garage that was suitable to set up a chancellery for the first stage. In an occasional place, where the French or British had been, it was easier to buy a nice merchant's home for the residence—that's what we did at Brazzaville, a relatively nice house that had belonged to a French merchant or functionary.

Our first stop was Upper Volta, Ouagadougou. Just the name in itself is exotic. And there there was no hotel space, for instance, so we sort of farmed out. I stayed in a guest house that belonged to Protocol—out in the bush somewhere—well, not in the little downtown, but out somewhere; and very attentive protocol people that were really just tribesmen with

scarred faces, caste marks that had been carved on their faces when they were infants. But it was a very interesting thing to participate in that way in the making of diplomatic history, embassy history, and it certainly made it more realistic when you talked about posting people.

Daily we sent a telegram making recommendations, asking for guidance from home, or giving guidance. And I remember writing to my wife about the hardship, or non-hardship status, and I was able to compare everything against Basra, plus or minus, comfort level, health level. And believe it or not, most of those places I found to be better than Basra. Some were smaller and there were less resources. Basra, after all, was a city but climatically much worse, and health-wise much worse. The colonial powers were still there, they were still just moving out, so that the food, particularly the ex-French, or were about to become ex-French colonies, was very good.

Q: In a way with the colonial powers still there, do you think you were getting a somewhat warped view of how living was going to be later on?

JOVA: Oh, yes. For instance, what had been the Gold Coast (it is now Ghana), was pretty good. Sure, they didn't have the quality of the French food, but it was pretty good. And I know from young colleagues that have served in Ghana more recently that it was very, very hardshipy because the whole system had broken down over those years. They really had nothing to eat. They had to run little convoys to the neighboring little country, Dahomey on one side, and Nigeria on the other, to pick up food. The security situation was bad. Well, there the structure existed. There were female judges, English judges, including black female judges; it was quite impressive. You're right. It was a false impression because that situation didn't last although in some countries I gather things continued well, certainly in Kenya, and Nairobi is a big city nowadays.

But for somebody who didn't know Africa at all, it was sort of a surprise. It wasn't all jungle. Quite the opposite. It is mostly savannah land with open spaces. The Central African

Republic I remember was a jungle. It was interesting enough that I asked to stop the car, and take a photograph of me in among trees right at the edge of the road because I wanted to send it home to my kids. That's what they imagined Africa to be.

Q: Then you went off to Santiago, as Deputy Chief of Mission.

JOVA: I was assigned originally to be DCM in Beirut.

Q: No, we didn't get that.

JOVA: When this assignment was made there was a little bit of a discussion, and although I couldn't get into my own assignment, I could at least discuss it with my colleagues. There was the possibility of going to Bogota as DCM, or Beirut, Lebanon. I said, “Oh, I think that Beirut would be more interesting for me. I can always go to Latin America, I'm bilingual. I'm surprised I haven't been sent there before. But unless I solidify my Arabic background, it's gone forever.” Well, now I'm still known a bit in the NE Bureau; and I still remember a little of the spoken Arabic that I had and knew things about the area so I thought this would give me a much better professional grounding. And, of course, Beirut was the prize assignment in those days, it was sort of the Paris of the Middle East. So we had all our clothing designed for Beirut, our car was bought for that sort of thing, and suddenly the need arose for a DCM in Chile.

There was a new ambassador, Bob Woodward, a veteran ambassador who had been an ambassador several times. Later on he became Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America, and then ambassador to Spain, only there a short time. He got there and found a problem. The DCM, who is a fine person, had a very interesting wife, but she was ill. She was very ill, a nervous condition I believe, and Bob Woodward thought it wasn't fair to her, or to that family, for them to stay there, and it wasn't fair to the post, a decision that probably the individuals themselves wouldn't have made because they were contributing professionally, and enjoying it. But he felt there should be a change, and he asked for an immediate transfer, and a new DCM. And he asked for me. We told him no, I'm already

assigned elsewhere, but as still Chief of Personnel Operations we'll send you a list of options. He wasn't satisfied with any of them, and he knew the Foreign Service too well. Some of them were perhaps hard to place, been on the list for some time. And he said, “No, you guys are cheating me. I want something better.” We sent him better lists, and he insisted, “No, this is very important here.” He had to have somebody that he was at ease with, that he considered good, and he wanted John Jova. I said, “This is something that I have to stay out of. Let Mr. Henderson decide which is easier to fill, Beirut or Santiago, Chile.” Without me he heard evidence, and decided they'd break that assignment, that it was easier to find somebody else for Beirut.

Which shows you how inbred, and sort of bad the Latin American specialists group had become. It was really amazing because, after all, historically that was our main interest since the 19th century. To find that they didn't have somebody they considered of a calibre to go to Santiago. And it was easier to get somebody to go to Beirut of that calibre.

Q: It was almost basically a small cadre. I came into the Foreign Service in 1955, and immediately I knew nothing about this. I was told to stay away from Latin America because it has the reputation of being 1) inbred and somewhat second rate, and 2) once you go in there it's like a black hole, you never get out again. Did you have this impression when you were in Personnel?

JOVA: Latin America was often like, for the reasons you've just said, and certainly had less prestige, and less sought after by the younger people, or for the people seeking assignments other than the specialists. Mind you, the situation had changed. Castro had just come in, so that everybody was on their toes. This is one of the things that made it important, but it was inbred. They had some fine people, and continue to have fine people. And some of that reputation is not merited. On the other hand, it is true. I give this anecdote to show you that a small cadre was able to come up with a good DCM for Beirut, while ARA was not able to come up with an equally good DCM for Santiago.

So that assignment was broken to the disgust, dismay, of NEA which left scars. I don't think I could ever serve there again, although I understand they forgave me eventually, but they were very mad at Personnel for having broken this assignment. Off we went, but I did find that we were (strangely enough although having a Latin background, and having lived in Cuba as a child, and having worked in Guatemala, and having served in the Navy in Panama, having been involved in Spanish affairs) I was regarded as an intruder, and an outsider that really couldn't fully—well, be trusted, is not quite the word—but didn't merit full trust, I'll put it that way, as a real ARA expert.

Q: That's interesting. How did this manifest when you first got there?

JOVA: We were in the Bureau here before I left. I did find the Chilean desk much less good than I expected, for instance, and relatively somnolent. Of course, coming from PER/POD where you never stopped working, where the telephones never stopped ringing. You were always being sent for on the top floor, or calling somebody overseas. I transferred my base to the desk over there; it was very relaxed I found. And although it was very inbred I found it less hospitable in general. People are amazed at this. I found it less hospitable than the other two or three bureaus that I had been in, NEA, then NEA became AF while I was in Tangier, but then I was in EUR, both in Portugal and on the desk. There I found the people more welcoming, perhaps because I wasn't regarded as an intruder. NEA had a particularly strong tradition of hospitality. I think we talked about that—you never stayed in a hotel if it was at all possible for a colleague to put you up.

Then, mind you (a key point later on), they felt it was necessary to send not one person, but two people to obtain satisfaction that I was handling things well when I was Charg#, and when the elections were approaching. In both cases—one of them was Bob Hurwitch who came later, and he was a hard driver—he came down and said, “I wasted my time. John is handling this beautifully, but I'll help him,” and he became a team member and we're still intimate friends. And then later on he went off to Bolivia but he first came down with the thought that this was too much for an outsider, this election business.

And then they also sent Tom Mann, another person who had served in Chile, but two administrations before. He was again a fine person, and he came in and surveyed, but all his friends were pre-Alessandri.

Q: By the time you arrived had Bob Woodward left?

JOVA: By the time we got ready to leave, and my predecessor was ready to depart—it hadn't been planned that we'd go the next week or something.

Woodward was named Assistant Secretary of State for ARA, American Republics Affairs. There was a question of getting down within ten days so we could have at least some overlap. Bob was, oh, so compassionate, and so thoughtful, pointing out that it would be great if we were to have an overlap and arrive by the Fourth of July because they were giving a combination Fourth of July and farewell, a reception. That would give us a chance to start meeting people right away. So we got ready, awfully quickly, I remember that.

In those days, it was not that long ago, but it was a much longer flight than one thinks. To go to Panama, change planes there, then go again to Lima where beyond that you couldn't go by jet. They already had jets but you couldn't go by jet because Santiago was not prepared to receive jets, so they had prop driven planes. And after Lima, a terrible stop, the plane landed in Antofagasta on Chilean soil, and the young man in charge of the consulate came out to receive us at the plane, and to accompany us during our half hour stop. That was Tom Boyatt. He was already very inspiring, he looked like an eagle scout type. He had organized a baseball team there, and also played soccer with the local military commander who was Pinochet who later became the dictator. And then on to Santiago, and mind you, we were received like kings. Bob Woodward himself came out to the airport to greet us, along with some of the staff. We were put up in the Carrera Hotel which is the best hotel. So it was a very short assignment together.

And then I was left as Charg# and we were able to move into the residence at Bob's suggestion. So here we were living in this beaux arts 1890 or 1905 building that could

have been in Paris. We lived there for a month or so while they were fixing the DCM residence, and until they named a new ambassador, Charles W. Cole. He was non-career, but a wonderful person.

Q: Was he president of Amherst?

JOVA: He had had 14 years at Amherst, and before that he was a professor of history at Columbia University, and at Harvard. After Amherst he had been vice president of the Rockefeller Foundation and then he was asked by the Kennedy administration to take this job.

Q: Before we move to him, what was the political situation in Chile when you first arrived there?

JOVA: Effervescent, but tranquil—or tranquil but effervescent. The president was Jorge Alessandri, and was known up here as the “businessman's president,” and it's true that he had been in business. He was head of the paper company—cardboard and paper company—which is a very big corporation in Chile; an old bachelor. One of the many children of the old president Alessandri who was known as “The Lion”, and the children were known as the Lion's Cubs in political parlance. Two of his brothers were also in the Senate. He had been elected from business, but had been elected as president replacing a military government.

I hope people realize how well he ran it. With the new wave of the Alliance for Progress, this was all looked on as very reactionary. He had been Eisenhower's favorite president on his trip through Latin America, one struck a responsive chord, he thought. That was enough, I suppose, to give him the kiss of death for the New Frontier people that had come in with Kennedy.

Q: You were saying that he was Eisenhower's favorite president, but when the Kennedys came in...after all he wasn't a military dictator. Why would we look with some disfavor on him?

JOVA: Perhaps disfavor is too strong, but there was a little bit of that atmosphere, and we were critical because Chile had the traditional social problems of Latin America, and viewed from up here it was run by an oligarchy, and the land owners were still strong. The few manufacturers were strong, and they had controlled inflation but still they had inflation, and they had an artificially high currency. But looking back people didn't appreciate enough the fact that it was a democracy, with all parties represented including the communists, freely represented in the congress—the socialists, etc., as well as the radicals who were sort of middle of the road despite the name, and the liberals, and the conservatives to the right.

Alessandri was brought into power by a combination of the liberals and the conservatives, a union of the two parties. But all in perfect tranquility. It was peaceful. Sure, there were occasional strikes and that sort of thing. He was very proud of being a citizen president. He could walk back and forth from his apartment to the presidential palace without guards, and people came in and out of the palace. They could come and go “as if it were a mass”, is the way he put it. He was an old eccentric, a real bachelor, with an old housekeeper, Maria, who prepared his simple foods—he would be up to date now because it was vegetables, a bit of fish, no animal fats, no liquor, maybe a thimble full of wine from time to time but otherwise mineral water, cream soda crackers. Those were endearing qualities. He was really loved by the Chileans because they thought those were kind of funny, eccentric, but endearing qualities. The fact that he was cranky and bad-tempered, but still good, really endeared him to the Chilean people. And when he turned over the government, when he left, there were cheering throngs all the way to his apartment. I think they regretted him afterwards. The Chileans themselves said, “Oh, we can't have him do this or that anymore because this is austerity now, those good times are past.” Now they

look back on those times as really la belle epoch, and certainly for us it was a wonderful experience from all points of view.

The Castro threat, the fact that eventually they'd be facing an election and we were already worried about that, if the socialists and communists came in to power through a free election, would be a terrible blow to our system. It would show that Castro could do it by force, but if they did it through the ballot box it would be legitimate. So everything was done to really shore this up and to advance loans, etc. and at the same time pressurizing them to do something about the currency—exchange rates. And that, for someone as old fashioned as Alessandri, was not willing to do. He said, “Look, our income from copper is fixed. The market is limited, we're not going to get more money by lowering the [exchange rate] thing. On the other hand, what we have to buy, we're going to have to spend a lot more money for if we lower the exchange rates.” And all these things are true in the short run. But the longer this lasted, the distortions, I think the economists call it, the economy grew ever bigger. So eventually he did with an IMF team, a monetary team, but headed by a rather understanding person. But that took an awful lot of negotiating back home with the IMF for them to recognize the Chilean problems, and the strengths that existed, along with negotiating with Alessandri and his government to see the light as far as devaluation. It finally happened, and it was a good thing because as long as they didn't devalue, as one my economic counselor used to say, it will be like drops of water on a hot skillet, any loan we give goes away in no time. But then it created, on the other hand, devaluation which also brings other hardships as we're seeing in Russia and everywhere else.

But the fact is that it was a free democratic political system; it was like being in Europe in many ways; following the politics; the parties. You could have access to anyone; the communists if you wished. You could see the communists, perhaps less friendly, but certainly the socialists were friendly. Chile considered itself a leader, particularly as it was democratic. And then with a very active reform movement headed largely by the Christian

Democrats, which was a new wave headed by Eduardo Frei, and eventually he became the president. Well, that again started to take place while we were there.

Q: The reform of the Catholic church?

JOVA: Exactly. The reform of the Catholic church, and the liturgy, and its activities; but also therefore support for reform movements that were apt to be Christian inspired. The Jesuits had a study center that was in the forefront in Latin America, perhaps elsewhere, spreading Christian Democrat principles of reform, which included land reform, unions, participation by workers, as well as advance church reform. And Ambassador Cole was a very inspiring and good leader. He was a wonderful person.

Q: How did he use you as the DCM?

JOVA: He used me with the greatest freedom possible. You see, too often there's that little spirit of jealousy, or envy, or fear, between a political appointee and the career people. And, of course, what we in our Service used to say, “Oh, that's wonderful. He's going to have a seasoned DCM to break him in.” Just think how offensive that word is, “break him in,” to the new ambassador. But in the case of Ambassador Cole, he was certainly a broad-minded person, and knew nothing about Latin America, and didn't speak a word of Spanish, but he spoke very good French. No, he was a pleasure to work with and I learned so much from him.

Also, as a member of the Rockefeller Foundation, and being a trustee of the Merrill Charitable Trust, he was also in a position to obtain grants for worthy causes in Chile. Even after he left I obtained grants there, and later on, thanks to those connections, I obtained grants in Honduras for peasant training centers, binational centers, which gave him, and therefore me, a little bit of freedom from the more bureaucratic aid grants. Although perhaps patterned on that the aid created something called the Ambassador's Fund, or Impact Fund, for impact projects particularly as these elections drew nearer. So a great deal of money was spent on things that would show soon to have the Chilean people

recognize the benefits that came from the American way of life—a new dam here, a little irrigation project there, technical assistance on land reform. That was a way you might say of fighting the socialist, Allende, the pre-candidate at that time.

Q: Later, of course, Allende came in during the Nixon administration. There have been substantiated allegations of the CIA getting very much involved. Did you have the feeling we were behaving ourselves? We were concerned about this election coming up, but did you have the feeling we were working, as you mentioned, the overt type of aid, and trying to show being a friend of the United States is good. Did you have the feeling that we were paying it off, or doing things we shouldn't?

JOVA: I think we worked pretty well as a team, which isn't true everywhere, or at all times. But there was a pretty coordinated effort towards the same goals. There is a rivalry between and that came from the political cults, and there certainly was rivalry always. But there it went off particularly well, I think, and we were working for a common goal. We have to remind ourselves they're Americans too, and that's an asset. Sometimes they do foolish things. But later on the covert activities became more intense, if you will, as we tried to help defeat Allende.

Q: This is after your time?

JOVA: No, no. Remember that we defeated him once. I know that we helped the Christian Democrats, I mean helped fund them.

The U.S. and the embassy, and Ambassador Cole particularly, wasn't 100% certain that Christian democracy was the best thing for the United States. After all, the Chilean brand of Christian democracy was considerably more leftist, and more show-off in that way, than the traditional European, frequently taking anti-American stances at the UN, the OAS, and the press.

So at first, I would say, the embassy tried to be judicious. We wanted to prevent Allende from coming, but without supporting necessarily the Christian Democrats, but trying perhaps just by being anti-Allende, helping everybody, but not identifying ourselves with anyone. And Ambassador Cole, who was an older person then, was more conservative than the younger ones, including myself. Even I had my hesitations sometimes about the Christian Democrats' attitudes. But obviously they had a better chance at winning, and it was a much more appealing doctrine that they had than the more traditional things of the liberals, the conservatives, the radicals. I, myself, a Catholic, was also involved a little bit in the sort of reform movements, so it was appealing. But at the same time I didn't lose my head over it. It took a while until we could say institutionally as an embassy, this side, the Christian Democrats, was the realistic thing to support, and a long-run benefit. You just have to have a little bit thick skin sometimes, like I used to later on in Mexico, for instance.

Then, how to help them? And this was with the blessings of Frei. Should they be the only candidate against Frei, Allende, or was it healthy to have a third candidate, or fourth candidate running? And little by little the candidates dropped out. The Conservatives, and the Liberals, had three candidates, but they dropped out. The Radicals had a candidate. And it was the Frei opinion, and the opinion of his advisers, that it was better for him to have the Radicals running because there were a great many Radicals who were very anti-clerical, very traditional. They'd vote for the left rather than voting with a party that was considered, while Christian, they were associating to one degree or another with the Church. It was important to give them an option so they wouldn't go fully left, and stay with their Radical party. Radicalism is really a party of bureaucrats; they service the bureaucrats, and the bureaucrats service them. Their symbol is a big soup spoon because their whole idea was pay off, and participate in the benefits of politics...not their whole idea. But their radicalism had been rather diluted, it was sort of a middle way. So we worked quite hard to keep the radical candidate, a Senator, Julio Duran, keep him in the race. And it worked, and Frei won handily.

Q: This election was when?

JOVA: 1964. Then there was the feeling, “Ah. We made a big mistake, we could have won anyway. We shouldn't have taken U.S. help.” And this, of course, was embarrassing to be filtered out as it has been over the years, that there was U.S. help for Frei. I think we could be quite open, and I always am, about saying yes, but it was more impact projects, and helping the Radicales at his request. Helping the Radicales to stay in the race to dilute the trend leftward. But I think we gave more help than that. Certainly there were people trained in running election campaigns. Some of the things were rather silly. The Chileans knew more about elections, and about campaigning, about politics, than anyone in New Jersey did.

Q: This anti-Americanism. How would this manifest itself? Was this one of these things that was endemic within the Latin American culture?

JOVA: Yes, to different degrees in different countries. We're the great big partner, we're in the same hemisphere, even these that are far away. And Chile, it was a surprise to me —I didn't know that much history—there was always some resentment because there was a feeling that we were pro-Peruvian. Don't forget that there had been the War of the Pacific, and that we had favored the Peruvians back then, and we always had because of our interest in Peru. We also had big interests in Chile, the Andaconda, and other copper mining interests.

The Argentines also are very anti-American although we couldn't be further away in miles at the other end of the spectrum. And many times they feel they are more cultivated than we are because they are more European, or because they have a more sophisticated political system. They have such a free political system that they can laugh at Americans being McCarthyites, or worrying about communist behind every bush. No, our system is strong enough that we don't have to worry. We are able to have relations with these parties, and with Moscow, but out of deference to you we're not doing it yet, but we want

to do it. They also got their comeuppance because it turned out that they played it that way but later on, after Frei, Allende came in.

Q: One other thing I wonder if you could talk about, because it's so important in some places in our Latin America policy. That was our military to their military relationship. How did you see that at the time we're talking about?

JOVA: Oh, it was good and positive. And in those days the Chilean armed forces were considered to be guardians of democracy, and wonderful. Mind you, they had had a general as president but everybody seemed to have forgotten that, and said, “No, our system is great, and the armed forces are great, they are the biggest supporters of the constitution, and of civilian government.” And they were a good armed forces, and they got along well with ours. They were interested in the election. They also were fearful of Allende getting in. I'm talking about the second time. He had run once before. And, of course, this was one of the things we were interested in, “Would they do something to stop him if he were to come in?”

Q: What was the concern about Allende at the time we're talking about, within our embassy, and up here in Washington?

JOVA: Grave concern.

Q: Why?

JOVA: Just the fact of winning through the ballot box would be terrible. Would he have his allies, the communists. He was a Marxist, but he was a Socialist Marxist, but still he was a Marxist, and here we were doing the Alliance for Progress and spending all this money. First Kennedy, who loved the Christian Democrats, and the people around them, and Johnson who hated anything...well, the Kennedys also, they're the ones who invented counter-terrorism. Later on they sort of washed it a bit, and laundered it and made counter-

terrorism mean doing good things like impact projects. But originally it meant doing the real thing.

This was given the highest priority, to beat Allende democratically, but the fallback was that we were already exploring with the armed forces; if there was a run-off election, would they stand back of it? I must say, I had no trouble at all with our military. I know in some places the embassy and the ambassadors had great trouble with the head of the MAAG, the military mission, the attach#s. No, good collaborators; CIA also was upset, but as I say, they too are Americans helping the nation, but still there is a little rivalry between us, and they have been taught to lie, and they don't come clean all the way. But I think you have to respect the fact that they did perform a useful role.

Q: You were saying the story continued. But again, we're talking about your term in Chile when you were looking at it. How did this play out?

JOVA: Poor Julio Duran, he perhaps helped, but they won handily, and there was great euphoria at home, and in the embassy. I remember we were in constant touch with the State Department, and when the election returns were in we finally said, “We've broken all the rules, we've opened champagne, we're toasting it down here too.” And at home, by that time Kennedy had been killed, and at that time it was a Johnson thing and he was concentrating on Vietnam more and more, but still he wanted a tranquil Latin America, and no horsing around about it.

Again, it was a most interesting experience, the opportunity to work with Frei, and that government for nine months. Once we had won the election, Ambassador Cole felt that his job was done, and he was increasingly eager to get back to his own life, so he offered his resignation. Strangely enough I had been sounded out, would I accept being ambassador to El Salvador? And I was very enthusiastic about that. With Ambassador Cole resigning I got word, “That's off, we need an orderly transition there, you're going to be charg# until they select a new guy, and you have to break the new guy in, assist the new guy as much

as possible. We're withdrawing your name." I said, "Opportunity knocks but once." "No, no, you're well thought of, and this will be your contribution. You'll get it again." But you know, it doesn't happen.

Q: All these promises mean nothing.

JOVA: So Ambassador Cole left and he didn't even wait for the new term to begin. He said, "The election is the important thing, I want to get back and do my own thing, go to our house in Amherst, his interest in fly fishing, and the two foundations he was on." They went back and she died shortly thereafter. Mrs. Cole was an equally nice person. I was Charg# d'Affaires again at a most interesting time for the turnover; for the assumption of power by the new government; for the inauguration which is a big thing. People came from all over the world because this was a historic event, Christian Democracy winning through the ballot box. That was an inauguration to beat all inaugurations from the local point of view, great popular enthusiasm, and we named a very high level mission headed by Adlai Stevenson, with his dear friend Marietta Tree, and several others: the president of Cornell University; a mixed bag; the woman who translated Gabriela, the Chilean Nobel Prize winner, David Lloyd Krieger and his wife. We had to work awfully hard on that. Again, it was a successful participation, and I treasure the memory of Governor Stevenson, and of Marietta Tree, who is beautiful. It's easy to forget that, but right there in Chile they knew about him and crowds would go wild applauding every time he stepped outside, partly because he was a U.S. representative, but the fact that it was Adlai Stevenson.

Q: Bob Woodward mentioned that he was astounded at his popularity when he came in, very early on, in Chile when he first arrived.

JOVA: One terrible thing happened, and I quote Frei on this. It was a bad thing. A few months after the presidential election they had the other elections to fill seats in the congress and the senate, and the Christian Democrats swept that too. He said, "This is very bad for me because now we have absolute majority in the congress, and we have

the presidency, and that's a most difficult situation to maintain party discipline." And there you found the Christian Democrats vying for being — one more leftist than the other — for power, looking for their own futures. And I saw what he meant. Of course, they paid for this later.

But I became quite friendly. I knew him so well during the times we were helping him in the campaign. Naturally as president he was a little bit more remote, but I continued to see him whenever I wished, and talked informally with him. His wife was homely as sin strangely enough, but a very good and wonderful person, and most of the people in his cabinet.

Eventually they named a new ambassador, and then what had been paradise with Ambassador Cole, became hell you might say, with Ralph Dungan, who really was the most difficult person for Foreign Service people.

Q: Where did he come from? What was his background?

JOVA: White House, and from New Jersey originally, that part that adjoins Philadelphia, and had been a political operative, and had never really run anything. The only time he had to run people was when he was in the Marine Corps, had ran the Officer's Club, or something of that sort. The rest of the time he was a lone operator, with sharp elbows —smart as could be, but jealous of anybody else, not accustomed to working as a team member. And I did my best to tell him, "Look, this is a wonderful machine that you have inherited, it's just a question... (end of tape)

...instinctively wants the American ambassador to be a success. Yes, we're whores, yes we are whores—that is what he would call us—we're accustomed to serving whatever party, whatever president is in office, but certainly we serve the one who is in office, he is our president and therefore you are his representative. He, of course, one of those with intense animal energy which I admired, quick witted, but very emotional, and just Christian Democracy and here was God's gift to the world, anything that was Catholic, and anything

that was leftist was it. Let's make friends with the communists, let's play tennis with the newest ambassador. Well, I think, as the Latins say, the first rule of politics is don't divide and subtract, but add and multiply. They lost because Allende got a third of the vote and there were three candidates, but he got 33%. It's very minor, and they could have avoided that I think if they had been encouraged, “Look, work together,” like we did the time before.

Q: Were you there?

JOVA: No, I wasn't there. I was gone but I was ambassador to the OAS.

Q: Why would he have come this way? I mean this sounds very personal with him, rather than the infatuation with the left and putting down others. This wasn't really our policy, the Johnson policy.

JOVA: Not the Johnson. That's one of the reasons he left the White House.

Q: They just wanted to get rid of him?

JOVA: I think they did.

Q: Would you describe him as being kind of a left-wing radical or something like this?

JOVA: ...an idealist. No question, an egomaniac and took things very personally. He was a reformist, idealist, ideologist, that sort of thing, with his attraction to reform, and specifically to Christian Catholic reform, and a hatred for the business class. Right there he alienated the whole American community. And I remember when they came to ask him, “Would you and Mrs. Dungan be the chairmen of the American Ball”...a charity thing that raised money. And the response was, “We haven't come down here to dance.” You get the picture, I mean that's a little tiny thing. Hated the business interests at home, and there in Chile even more so. Anyway, I think if you talked to anybody that served there they found

him very difficult to work with, and me, the DCM, attempting to be a little bit of a cushion, and the staff in the middle was not successful.

Fortunately, I say, “How did I miss that second term? Opportunity knocks but once.” And who knows what would have happened. If another cycle of efficiency reports came, who knows what would have happened to me then? I know my wife, who was not Catholic made a vow like a good Latin to visit our Lady of Fatima at the local church parish twice a week and said a prayer, “Dear Lord, dear Lady, help us, get us out of here alive.” And it worked, I guess, because they suddenly offered me the ambassadorship in Honduras. And who knows if that would have happened after a cycle of efficiency reports.

Q: Let me ask, before we finish with Chile. Here you've got an ambassador, I mean this guy is in diplomatic parlance, a son of a bitch to work for, but he is also alienating the American business community which is extremely important. He is cutting us off from contacts with the other parties which traditionally we're supposed to be...here you are, a professional. Obviously you're supposed to support your ambassador but at the same time your greater loyalty is not to the ambassador but to American policy. How did you work in this situation? I'm talking about communication with the desk, other places. How did you operate under this situation?

JOVA: I used to think I could get along with anybody. I was wrong. I had to speak my mind. On politics, of course, he had a lot of direct experience, therefore he thought he knew. And opinions to the contrary he considered striped pants, deals of cookie pushers, not to use those terms necessarily, but that attitude. And then, of course, from an ego point of view for him to say, “Oh, isn't that wonderful. I've a DCM who already knows everybody, who is bilingual in Spanish.” All those things were daggers in his heart. Whereas Ambassador Cole was broad-minded enough to forgive me for the fact that I spoke Spanish; the fact that I already knew people there; that I could have access. Dungan couldn't, and by that time I was much more important than when Ambassador Cole came. I had been charg# so many times, I had lived through the

elections, etc., and it was most annoying to him. He could forgive the fact that we had friends in the Conservative and Liberal parties, but the fact that we had friends in the Christian Democrats—that we knew them, that was unforgivable. Because, of course, while he was in the White House all those people were going up to see him, so he knew a lot of them well before he came down.

Q: What happened to him? I mean did he last much longer? Was he there very long in Chile?

JOVA: Well, he lasted enough time, I think, to do some damage, and then he was succeeded by another person equally dangerous, equally egomaniac or more, Edward Korry, but I was already gone. We'll come to him later, if you like, when I was at the OAS.

Q: We'll pick it up then.

JOVA: I'll just give you an anecdote. As one Chilean said, “Yes, he'll put up with any criticism of the United States, but he won't put up with any criticism of Edward Korry.”

And years later I was ambassador to the OAS and named to head the American delegation to a UN conference, actually the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, and it had its headquarters in Chile. But this was going to be the UN from all over, a conference on Latin America. He took that as an affront that I was going to be in the country. I didn't know this, but Charlie Meyer, who was our Assistant Secretary, told me that afterwards. He was jealous of me, and here I had already been gone several years, and I was coming for something specialized. I wasn't going to be mingling with the Latins; he even went to the point of—he sounded out, “Would you give a reception?” I didn't realize the feelings were so strong, “Yes, if you bring your own funds. This embassy is too poor to host a reception for you.” So we had a reception in the Polo Club that I used to belong to, which was near where we were meeting anyway. And he didn't come, but

his wife came. They were already under pressure, they knew that they were not looked on with favor at home by then.

Q: It isn't surprising. This is what can happen. It can happen with career people too.

JOVA: It can happen with career people, we're not exempt from it, but we're a little more realistic.

Q: ...sort of been through the mill, but at the same time this ambassadorship can do things to people.

JOVA: And to those first ladies, because when they get an ambassador, its like, “Hey, you're criticizing the ejido system, or the plantation system.” Here is the same thing, when they get the plantation, they get the serfs on it, they get the laborers on it, completely in the old days. I don't know what it's like now, but the political appointees, they had everybody, the wife had all the women, and riding roughshod over everybody.

Q: One last question before we finish this section. In Chile, and God knows some distance removed, but how did we view Cuba from there? Because this was at the height of Castro, and he was going to exploit his revolution.

JOVA: This is why this was so important to us.

Q: I mean did we have the feeling that the Cubans were messing around there at all?

JOVA: Cuba, of course, isn't a member of the OAS, but is a member of the United Nations, so they were represented there. I found there was a fatal attraction, Latin to Latin, and also just because it was like a little element of danger, an excitement to be friendly with the Cubans, and I found there were people around them all the time. And in spite of our blockade, or perhaps because of it—not a blockade, but an embargo—they meant something. I was polite to them, talked to them a bit—not at length, but talked to them—

but I did see how difficult the United States' position is. The instinct is to go the other way with the Latins.

I can't remember whether Frei opened the embassy with Cuba, or not. I don't think so. No, they continued to obey, fight against it in the OAS, but always skirting it, trying to have trade, but did not open the embassy. They opened an embassy with the Russians, and that we made a big thing about when they said they were going to do that. I had to pull the stops at the highest levels, and Frei got quite mad. He said, “Look, this is ridiculous. I have to be independent. I'm respecting your country in regard to China. I realize that is a very emotional thing for you on China, and I'm not doing it with China although I'm under pressure to do so. But with the Soviet Union, I'm under great pressure to do so. Also you have relations with them. You don't have it with China. Several other Latin countries have, how can I, coming in a new wave, not have relations with the Soviet Union? Naturally we'll try to make it at arm's length, but I must have it.” Well, he did, although Stevenson and his delegation were under instruction to pull out the same stops, and they got the same reply, with increased annoyance.

And locally he had the Soviets in, and of course, Ralph Dungan played tennis with the new Soviet ambassador, so it was a big event. On the other hand, while he was there, they didn't open the thing with Red China.

Q: Well, Dungan was there, and doing this stuff, I'm surprised there wasn't somebody coming out and spanking him from the White House or the State Department.

JOVA: Well, eventually he lost his position. Not because he was playing tennis with the Soviets, but just in general. I'm telling you about the way he treated us, our people, his staff. This was common knowledge at home. They knew it every day more and more. And, of course, bad news always gets back. At all levels people were writing, not in the cables, but there is a telephone. People in Washington would come down. He may have stayed all through the Johnson years, I don't think so. They kept him there because of the delicacy

of the Chilean situation. And he was a smart person, he had already been head of Time, or something of that sort. But anyway, Ralph got his comeuppance, and when he left he became Commissioner of Education for New Jersey. And it was the same way there, and at the end of a year they raised a lot of money and bought out his contract. Then he was without anything until the Democrats came back again. They made him our representative to the Inter-American Development Bank. And then at the bank he became unpopular, but the bank takes care of its own, and when he lost that job, and he did lose it, they named him to a special post that had been created, located in Barbados to foment private enterprise, and private investment in the Caribbean region. I thought that was ironic. Here is somebody who hated the business community so much and that was what he was sent to do.

Q: How did that appointment as ambassador come about? This is always the big step when you're first appointed ambassador.

JOVA: I was told, “There'll be other opportunities.” One can't help but wonder because not for nothing they have that old saying, “Opportunity seldom knocks twice.” But you can just hope for the best. Circumstances change, and certainly if I had been there much longer with Dungan, I might have been completely unsaleable, who knows.

I had gone with the Air Attach# on this boondoggle, if you will, to the southern most regions of Chile and Argentina. We spent a day or night in some of these sheep ranches, and then we were in Punta del Arenas, which is right by the Straits of Magellan, and we were at dinner with the Naval Commander of the region who was an admiral. And while we were at dinner the aide interrupted, and said, “We have the embassy in Santiago calling Mr. Jova.” Sure enough, the embassy in Santiago was on the phone and the duty officer said, “We have this cable that just arrived from the Department which says “The President is thinking seriously of naming you as ambassador to Honduras, but before proceeding with this determination wishes to know if you would accept such a nomination, if indeed it is offered.” So that was a great thrill. I went back to the table, and the admiral at once said,

“Break out the champagne.” So we had a champagne toast at this good news. That's how I learned, but it was rather dramatic.

We went back to Santiago a couple of days later. Sure enough, I read it, and I said, “Reply affirmatively.” It takes a little while, but it was eventually announced. I remember that the Chileans were such snobs in some ways and think Santiago is heaven, and it is in many ways. The reaction was, “Poor Jova.” I think even the newspapers, “What has he done to be assigned to Honduras?” I explained, “Yes, but you have to start somewhere.” It was a wonderful thing, it was my first embassy.

Q: What was the year?

JOVA: This was the summer of 1965.

Q: So this was the Johnson administration. Who was the head of ARA? What was the atmosphere of ARA when you got back there, because this has always been such a volatile place. Sometimes its rather placid, and other times its got some personalities that have very strong ideas about our policy there, and I was just wondering how you found it at that time. Was Tom Mann there at the time?

JOVA: I believe he was. Tom Mann, Lincoln Gordon...

Q: And Bob Woodward at one point, just for a short period.

JOVA: Oh, he was already in Spain.

Q: He had been yanked out, and he was only in ARA for a few months.

JOVA: Chile was only a few weeks, and then in ARA for a year or so. It wasn't very long, and then he was given that very important job as ambassador to Spain.

Q: But Mann was probably it at the time, wasn't he?

JOVA: I have a feeling Jack Vaughn. He said, “Look, John, we don't want somebody there trying to impose Quai d'Orsay French protocol. We want somebody who will go after the people like Peace Corps, mingle with the young people.” Which I think was a slam at my predecessor who was a wonderful person, and certainly knew Central America.

Q: Vaughn was a Kennedy ilk, shirt sleeves; out with the campesinos. This was very much a Kennedy feeling.

JOVA: Very much, and it was a good thing to be reminded of. Certainly in a place like Honduras which was very poor at that time, and where we had a very big embassy. It was disproportionate. Now all the rich Arabs have built things that are even bigger. But it was sort of disproportionate for the state of that country. This was good advice because I also was a creature of that time. I think I mentioned the second Peace Corps went to Chile; the first one went to Nigeria, so we were all enthused with a little bit of that spirit.

Q: What was our policy towards Honduras, or did we have one?

JOVA: We were mad at them. We had one, but we were a little bit mad at them because they had a coup, and they had a military government. As a matter of fact, Ambassador Burrows had been withdrawn for several months in protest, and they had to live here in Washington for quite a period of time until they sent him back, rather reluctantly. I'd say the instructions were, to the extent they were instructions, “cultivate the little people, watch out for human rights, cover democracy.” But at the same time, as only a government can do, talking out of both sides of their mouth, “cultivate the government because there are big investors, the United Fruit Company,” which I had worked for in my youth. Plenty of land reform, as long as they don't touch any of United Fruit Company's, even United Fruit Company's properties that had been abandoned, or that they hadn't cultivated for years. The minute the government tried to seize those, or peasants seized them that was sanctified by the government, there was a big strong reaction from Washington. That's normal.

Q: Just a little feel, because I think its very important to try to capture times, and we're talking about the mid-1960s, and everybody thinks of Central America, the banana republics, and the United Fruit and business interests being so important, although this was probably a waning thing. Did the business interests that you talked to, having interests in Honduras, have any complaints, or requests, for you to do when you got down there?

JOVA: I think it was more, don't rock the boat, don't be carried away by all this stuff about the little people. Mind you, it was quite perfunctory, because there weren't that many business interests in Honduras, that many important ones. So we did meet people from the United Fruit Company, and also from the Standard Fruit Company, and perhaps from Texaco which was building its refinery there. That was the only refinery in the country, one of the few in Central America. But it wasn't a big deal, not like later on when I was named ambassador to Mexico. You're always given little tasks.

First of all, the ambassador from Honduras is very nice, and in Washington still, said, “I can't give you a party the way I'd like to because my wife and I are going to Disneyland.” I remember people criticized that. After all, they don't change American ambassadors that often, and the Honduran ambassador in Washington had a golden opportunity, but he said, “Instead of that we're going to take you out for dinner.”

When we arrived there, we were met of course by all the embassy people, the attach#s, the Charg#, and the chief of protocol representing the Honduran government. The chief of protocol had an official Honduran government car. We got into that, they stepped on the starter, and the damn thing wouldn't start. It went on and on. I said, “This is really like a movie.” I told him, “The embassy will take care of us for sure.” We got into the next embassy car with the DCM. It was also lunch time, mid-day, some people were literally, with the big hats, taking siestas. And the chief of protocol, with a certain amount of pride, half joking, but half pridefully also said, “This is our traffic light.” There was only one traffic light. The Peace Corps devised a system of having lights all over town, and a couple traffic lights. We saw the presidential palace which was deserted, and went up the hill to the

great big beautiful embassy that we have there, and we offered a glass of champagne for the chief of protocol.

Q: I wonder if you could give me your impression...you said it was a big embassy, disproportionate really to the country. Could you talk a little about the size of the embassy, and its operation as you saw it while you were there?

JOVA: People think of these places as little tiny places, but the very fact does require more people. In other words, we had a very large A.I.D. mission which grew even larger after that. We had a large Peace Corps office. We had agricultural attach#s, and we had a reasonable size embassy staff, a standard size, three or four people in the political section, the same in the economic section. The other agency had a few people, small because that had been de-emphasized, the undercover operations, and perhaps it was regretted later. No, it was a good size in personnel. The chancery, good size, a handsome building, a little bit impractical.

I found that the ambassador in Honduras really had a big managerial job because of the relative size, but you had a little bit of everything. At the same time you had the dregs, or the administrative corps helping you to run the thing. But we had a good DCM.

Q: Who was your DCM?

JOVA: John Fisher, very nice, and his wife Dorothy was very helpful, and two of his children were more or less the same age as my two older sons. They were into horses; we were into horses too. Here they had a little riding club composed mostly of embassy people, but also a few other Americans, and some Hondurans, and some foreign businessmen also. You could finish work, get in the car, and be at the stables in five minutes.

Of course, no guards, everything is messed up because when I visited Tegucigalpa recently, they have armed guards with you everywhere. In those days, nothing like that.

The situation changed and like the successor, they had to have guards. By the time he came the terrorism business started getting closer. One of the early kidnappings was next door in Guatemala.

Q: How did you deal in the embassy with all of these disparate groups? Some countries are dominated by one or the other. Did you find that in Honduras or was it sort of straightforward?

JOVA: No. Certainly in Portugal, to jump back in time, the military mission was a big problem for the Ambassador, I know that. And not only the MAAG mission director but his wife who was like a steamroller and ambitious. I remember that was a big problem to our then chief of mission, Ambassador Bonbright, and I sympathized.

In Chile we had trouble with AID. I know the ambassador was instrumental in changing one, and we got another who turned out to be even worse as far as relationships with the embassy.

In Tegucigalpa, AID was a problem. And believe it or not, CIA. The AID program was very important to a place like that, and the AID mission group was composed of almost as many people as the embassy itself, maybe more. Sometimes the problems were just misunderstandings, and personalities. The first director was really good-hearted, and the problems were less intentional. The second one we had was very cold blooded, and very ambitious, and very strong on his rights, and difficult to make him see what our overall policy was. At one time after the Salvadorans had termed what everybody hoped would be a free election, not for president at that moment, but deputies and mayors, into in effect another coup. It banned the labor leaders who had been out of the country, from returning. We said, “All right. We're just going without saying it. Let's not be so crass as to say we're holding up aid because of this, because in a little place like Salvador you get a Papandreou like reaction. We're a free country. Look at Haiti right now, but they'll draw their own conclusions. Let's just slow down the thing.”

And, of course, we had two people there, one was Bob White, political counselor, or first secretary, as bright as could be and a good friend, but also over energetic. He took it upon himself to spell it out to the Prime Minister, in other words the man who ran the government for the general. “Yes, that's why you're not getting the aid.” Why say that? And the AID director and his people, some of his people, when two emissaries came to give more money away...I said, “Fine, but we're not doing it right now. We'll receive them, they'll come to see me, or I'll take them out to lunch, but I don't want them to go to see the president or the minister right now. Later perhaps.” Well, they couldn't see that. Washington could, but not the AID director.

Q: How did you deal with something like that? Did they try to go their own way?

JOVA: No, we won that one, but everything was a battle. And I think I just let it be known. This guy was too big for Tegucigalpa, but he wasn't really contributing to a harmonious working country team relationship. They moved him to Ecuador. Well, there he got in trouble with the ambassador, and he finally left AID and went to work in Nigeria as a consultant. I've seen him since then and he said, “One thing I've learned in this world...” still disagreeable but at least he was frank about that, “is no use fighting with your ambassador.” But then it caught up with him in Ecuador as he didn't come with a clean bill of health. In other words when the ambassador there, Findley Burns, complained that he wasn't getting the cooperation needed, they knew it wasn't just a whim because he already had a bad record in Honduras.

The other trouble was with CIA, the station chief. And I want to tell that story because not often does this happen. This was more with the person, rather than with the organization. I had had traditionally rather good relationships and in Chile we fought the battle together on the campaign to promote the election of president Frei. Only once did I have trouble there as you don't know everything they're doing. But this station chief was also a Latin American, and a Latin Hispanic background. We were friends and collaborated a lot,

and I knew more than usual. I'll put it that way. But his boss came with the head of Latin American Affairs, or even higher in the home office, and they brought him to me.

Q: This is in Chile?

JOVA: In Chile. And I remember suddenly I found myself sitting in my chair and being hectored and questioned. I finally said, “Hey now, wait a minute. Are we having a conversation, or is this an interrogation?” He reacted right away and changed his tone, and we started talking normally.

To jump back to Honduras, with the case we have in point. I can't even remember the station chief we had when I came, but he was good enough. As I say it had all been de-emphasized, and they had a much smaller...they had good files but weren't even keeping them up and didn't have assets to bring in new stuff except that one man and a couple of assistants. Two things made me mad. One, we got a new one who was new to the area, and hustling and bustling, an all-American type, but not very...you know what I mean. But we were getting along fine, and he wanted to meet the Prime Minister...that's shorthand, the minister to the new government. “Fine, I'm going to see him today, I'll be happy to request an appointment for you.” I thought this was the way to do it, and I did. I said, “Yes, you're going to see the Prime Minister,” who was an awful person it's true, but there he was, “...and he will be happy to see you next Thursday.” “Oh, good.”

A week later I see the Prime Minister and he said, “I want to tell you. I have consulted the president and he said that I should speak to you personally, Mr. Ambassador, because we don't want to be involved in your internal politics. Here is what has happened. This man you asked for an appointment, and we're happy to see him and I introduced him to the general, but what made me a little uncomfortable, and I think you should know it, is that he said, 'You know, we have our own channels of communication, and I want you to feel free to call me at any time. For instance, if you're at all dissatisfied with the ambassador, or the way he's handling things, you tell me and we'll be happy to get this to Washington'.”

Now it's true he was devious but this sounded accurate to me, and I was unhappy. I forget what I said to pass it off as a semi-joke but I remember consulting with Miss Wilkowski who was our DCM, Jean Wilkowski, and talking it over with her and calling him in, and saying to her, “I want you to be with me. And I want you to watch him.” That's a good CIA or FBI technique. “You watch him while I tell the story, and you note his reactions.” The devil is dangerous not because he's the devil, but because he's so old. And his face turned white, and he was taken aback, and said, “That son of a bitch.” He didn't say it was wrong, but “That son of a bitch.” And you could tell it was true.

So I said, “Look, its impossible for us to work together after this.” “Oh, yes, you can trust me.” Well, I got back in touch with the State Department and I said, “Look, I'm not against the man. Personally he's very nice, but after this I think it would be difficult for me to continue working with him, or my staff to continue working with him. This may go on. Maybe this is established practice, but to have him say it so openly is too much.” Well, believe it or not, they refused to move him. I was up on consultation and the CIA said, “You're going to ruin his career. We chose him especially. We think he should stay. This is being small-minded of you.” And I said, “You're free to do what you like. I hope we'll be able to solve this between us, but you give me no choice. You move him quietly because I've requested it as the ambassador and the chief of mission because of this and because of various other things.” In other words, this wasn't the only thing. “Or I have to take it up with the Department of State, and I'm sure they will back me up.” I wasn't so sure, mind you, but I said it. “We're insisting. That man is good and he should stay.” “Well, I have no choice then.” Then I was up in Washington, and I spoke with the liaison...I forget what they were called, INR.

Q: Yes, between CIA and INR.

JOVA: I knew them quite well from my personnel days. They loved the idea but were afraid to do anything. For one thing their whole budget was paid, in those days, almost the entire budget of INR was subsidized by CIA out of their budget. I said, “I'm awfully sorry but I'll

have to see the Assistant Secretary for Latin America." Their reply, "We've already spoken to him." And I said, "I'm seeing him." He said, "John, if that's the way you feel, if that's what happened, and if this is what you request, you're the ambassador there and the only thing we can do is to back you up. I won't even judge whether its right or wrong. If you request it, I'll back you." And sure enough, he left.

Years later I ran into him in the Embassy London and he was very nice to me. It was a brief encounter and he greeted me with what seemed to be joy, but maybe he was happy to get out of my embassy. He left and we got another very nice person who had some background in Latin America, and of Italian origin, and had the right feel for dealing with those people with that type of work on the one hand, and dealing with the embassy on the other.

There were two other things. Later on a CIA person when I was already in Mexico, or going to Mexico, said, "You know, you have a reputation of disliking us, or not getting along well." The other complaint, and I'm not sure I've ever raised this up higher, but I thought this was so stupid and so dumb, to ask the ambassador's secretary, my secretary, for permission to use her house to give lie detector tests of Hondurans. Of all people to choose, here you're supposed to be doing all these sorts of things, and you say we're secret, we don't involve the embassy, we can't tell the...this is not to get you in trouble, not to get the ambassador in trouble if we do these things. To choose the secretary of the ambassador, to use her house to do something that could...

Q: ...be blown sky high.

JOVA: On the other hand they have done a lot of good things.

Q: What we're trying to do is get a feel for some of the problems and you have conflicting agencies, and you have people coming into countries who have their own agenda and

often they don't understand that there's a United States agenda, not just either a CIA or an AID agenda.

JOVA: Exactly. Again in Mexico I had trouble with the DEA, Drug Enforcement Agency. They were participating in the violation of human rights of Americans. Americans were being tortured, beaten, sometimes Mexicans, but Americans too, to get information. I said, “Yes, but you were there.” And that's exactly what happened in Uruguay with the police training mission. The poor Uruguayans were being tortured and drugged by the police. When they came to they said, “We could hear them speaking English when they asked us these questions.” And that's what led Congress to close down the police training role for AID. You were repeating the same thing here in Mexico. “Oh, because we could never get information like that in the United States because there are civil rights laws that prevent us from torturing, but here we can be in at the torture.

Q: Oh, isn't that nice.

JOVA: When I was preparing to go to Mexico they said, “You know, Mr. Ambassador, you have a reputation of not getting along with our agency, but we hope we'll start off on a clean foot here. What we propose is, and here's a letter written by Tom Mann (one of my predecessors)...I never go to see the president, I let CIA, the station chief, do all the dealings with the president, and I never go to see him myself.” And I said, “Well, that may have been true at that time,” I hadn't even gone to Mexico yet, “I'll have to play this by ear but it does seem to me that if the ambassador wants to see the president, and if he has a good reason to do it, and if he's doing it with discretion, he should have the freedom to do it, and not be sort of semi-obliged in advance of commitment...

Q: I find that incredible.

JOVA: ...and do it all through the agency.

Q: Back to Honduras. How did you deal with the government of Honduras? In the first place could you describe, as you saw it, the political situation and any changes that happened. You were there from when to when?

JOVA: '65 to '69, four years. Well, we dealt with it like any other government, and had relationships with the various ministries, certainly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In effect, you had to do some of things with others, and you had to keep them happy, certainly with the Ministry of Economy, and the Ministry of Finance. We had a lot to do with them because of the AID programs, and because they had a very smart well prepared Minister of Economy. But the real power at that time was, of course, the president a general, Oswaldo Lopez Arrellano, who was an Air Force general who had been trained in the United States; who was little; not very impressive; seemingly kind of dumb in many ways; but smart as could be as far as politics, and had built up a little Honduran air force to be the best in Latin America. His army was rather small, but the air force was much better than in Guatemala or in Salvador. With a handful of planes, they were well trained and they were well kept up. That was his great big pride.

Wherever I've been, in all those countries, we've had lots of access to the local White House, the presidential house. Certainly in Chile that was the case. In Portugal, it wasn't. Salazar was rather remote.

Q: The Foreign Minister.

JOVA: The Foreign Minister, or the appropriate opposite. But certainly in Chile one could go see the president quite readily, either the ambassador or the Charg#, and certainly the Foreign Minister or any other minister. In Honduras I could see the president whenever I liked, and certainly Zuniga the same way. And that was true also in Mexico. Now I understand from others who have served in Brazil, for instance, that to see the president was a big, big thing for the ambassador. It was much more second hand, and our relations were good. Only after that election that was so criticized, and the labor leaders were

exiled, that our relations were somewhat soured. He practically told me that he was taking our conversations into the news against me. And as a matter of fact they did ask that I be removed.

Its true, their ambassador here or their ambassador to the United Nations...I don't remember, but they spoke with Dean Rusk who very nicely defended me. I don't mean he acted very strangely, but he very nicely defended me. “If they insisted, of course, the United States would do it. They had confidence in their ambassador, their ambassador was acting under orders, instructions, and their insistence that I be removed would certainly harm relations with the United States very quickly.” So nothing else was ever heard about it. The Hondurans never said that to me. I heard that from Washington, and after that they even apologized.

Q: Here you had this election which went sour, and you had these labor leaders who were exiled. What was the mechanics? Did you on your own, or in consultation with Washington, decide that we were going to make our unhappiness known, and then how did you go about making your unhappiness known?

JOVA: Certainly not by making overt declaration to the press, or the radio, or anything of that sort.

Q: But the aid business.

JOVA: I said, “Look, it's hurting the image of Honduras. It's hurting Honduras' position in the United States. It's hurting Honduras' position in the civil field, and the human rights field. They weren't invented by Carter. They existed before.” And they let them in, true also for Jesuits. They had been jailed. I finally got them out, and went to the airport. I remember I picked them up and brought them to the residence. He was an activist Jesuit, Father Guadalupe. He was an American citizen, and I brought him to the residence to clean up, spend the night, gave him new clothes, and made it clear that he was under our protection

and then he went back. He got in trouble again because he was a very outspoken, agitator is the wrong word to use, but on the other hand he was worth helping.

Q: As you were making your unhappiness known, were the United Fruit or American business interests, or people in Congress, saying, "Cool it." When you have labor agitators who are opposed to American interests, which is also high profile and an easy target, the American interests are not very happy about seeing these guys running around. How did you handle that?

JOVA: I converted the manager of Standard Fruit Company, to have a social conscience, and to start looking at those things with a new view.

Q: How did you convert him?

JOVA: Well, just talk when I'd give him lunch, or stay in the house, or I'd go down and stay with him also. And little by little he started seeing things from a 1967 point of view, rather than a 1905 view. He was young. He lost his job, but we're still friends. But lots of times they had unprecedented labor peace, and usually the relations, unless they were too narrow-minded, they could see the advantage to them of working together, and doing good things. They had to stand on their own rights, they couldn't give everything away. United Fruit Company were more wily perhaps, and I wasn't so close to them. The very fact that I had worked for United Fruit Company as a child, a kid right after college, maybe that had something to do with it. They were never fully comfortable with me, except towards the end.

Q: Obviously our relations with Cuba, if you want to call them that, were abysmal. Did this have any impact on Honduras? Or was Honduras just not interested in Cuba?

JOVA: Oh, sure, it was interested in Cuba. Mind you, the Cuban radio could be heard very distinctly. They were generally helpful on Cuba. They were also helpful on the Dominican Republic.

Q: I was going to ask. The Dominican Republic crisis happened?

JOVA: It happened just before I left Chile, and yes, Honduras sent troops, a small number but they had a presence there. I remember talking the general into sending some Honduran entertainers over for their troops, but also to perform for all the other troops. That made everything more visible, and that worked out well. They were anti-communist, quite strongly, so that was helpful. They also had some Cuban business people that had established themselves there. They were in other ways influencing the government. At the same time mind you, like all the little Latin American countries, you can't ask them to renege on their Latins. And even if they were unsympathetic to the Castro government, at the same time there was also simpatico, a good fellowship feeling towards a fellow Latin country. I've noticed that over and over again in the OAS, for instance, when there were meetings, and I've also headed American delegations to UN meetings in Latin America. There would have to be much more confraternization, if you want to call it that, between the Latin American delegations, and the Cuban delegation than one would think appropriate.

Q: From time to time did you say, if something would happen and we would be castigated for this or that, that you would tell the embassy and the State Department to cool it? This is ritual yankee bashing, and you've got to accept some of this and allow them to do it here as long as you're getting cooperation there, or something like that.

JOVA: Yes, in various circumstances, and in various countries, to try to make them see things in perspective. Sometimes we get terribly excited about something that the UN representative would say, or the OAS. Well, some of that is particularly true of Mexico.

Q: We use that too particularly in reference to communism. We sometimes go overboard.

JOVA: The instructions sometimes give a very narrow point of view, particularly the Republican White House, but also in the State Department. Somebody is always thinking

of the United Nations point of view on something. On China for instance, they would send you over and over again each year the “evergreen” that's what the Honduran Foreign Minister used to call them. The evergreens, those problems that don't go away, they're always present. On our position on China, we demanded and expected Honduras to do this or that, or Chile, or Mexico.

Q: This is on the problem of the recognition of Communist China on which we spent several decades of tremendous political capital, and then we turned around and didn't tell anybody and recognized them, basically.

JOVA: Recognized them, and also for what? We toyed with the idea of simultaneous recognition of Taiwan also. Now the Latins, rebelled at that. There could be only one or the other. Maybe we could have trade, etc. Of course, we solved it in a very Machiavellian way ourselves. This was when I was at the OAS.

January 29, 1992. This is one of a continuing series of interviews with Ambassador John Jova.

Q: John, we were just talking off microphone, and you were saying something that occurred to you about Honduras and our conversation that we might include before we move to the OAS.

JOVA: Of course, in those days when I was in Honduras, Somoza's son—as a matter of fact we had two of the sons during that period—Paco was sort of the civilized one. For a while he was more or less an elected president, and then Junior, his younger brother that was a military person as president there. I do remember this, whenever there was a little trouble or something in Honduras, the first thing the Department said, “Oh, let's speak to Paco Somoza, and have him call up the president of Honduras. Let's see if he won't put a little pressure, or beat a little sense in him.” I just give that as a little example of how much

the Department would depend on him to do our work in Central America, or wherever perhaps.

Q: Was there any disquiet? Or how was his regime viewed by you, by the Foreign Service establishment that was working down there?

JOVA: He was a dictator. The family monopolized power. Almost any new business that was started; they had a big stake in it; the air line; the shipping company. But I must say, in those days crossing the border into Nicaragua with all of its defects and that sort of thing, it was so much more advanced than Honduras. Maybe it was a big Somoza thing. A lot of people benefitted from it, and actually the people were considerably more advanced than the Hondurans were; highways, you name it. The Sandinista movement wasn't even formalized yet. Sure, they had a little bit of trouble from time to time but it wasn't serious. But I saw it as a dictatorship, and with unpleasant aspects. It did advance the country, and in general probably the well being was probably better. And the human rights violations were not so glaring, I don't believe. I never served there, I can't pass judgement. This is sort of off the hat, just from visiting there to stay with my colleague Aaron Brown, who was the ambassador, Salvador the same way. Sure it was run by the 14 families who were very, very important, but to go from Tegucigalpa to El Salvador you always felt that you were going for a little visit to Paris. On the other hand, the poor were very poor. And the story they would tell you was that in Honduras they were able to have a labor movement. They had a much more advanced labor movement as we mentioned earlier, partly at the expense of the fruit companies. I mean the American labor movement with the encouragement of our government did a great deal to encourage the growth of the labor movement. But in Honduras if you lost a job, you could find another one, or you could raise a little crop or something back in your family plot. In Salvador if you lost your job, that was it. It was so overpopulated, and the job market was tight. It was a growing economy and relatively industrialized compared to Honduras. But to lose a job was a very much more grievous thing in Salvador.

Q: You left Honduras in 1969, and you took on another major job. You were ambassador to the OAS from 1969 to 1973.

JOVA: Correct. The new administration came in just prior to that.

Q: This would be the Nixon administration.

JOVA: And Assistant Secretary for Latin America, Charlie Meyer, who was from the business world. A wonderful person, I don't know if he had anything to do with it. He knew something about Latin America because he had worked for Sears Roebuck.

Q: Talking about the new administration, sometimes when a new administration comes in, particularly when the Reagan administration came in in 1981, particularly in Latin America —I mean, there was blood in the corridor. As a professional dealing with Latin America, what was the view of the Nixon administration to Latin America, and how it took over, and the type of people it was sending out?

JOVA: Oh, it was much milder than the Reagan administration.

Q: But there was no great issue, was there, as far as Latin America was concerned?

JOVA: When the Reagan administration came I was already retired. I retired when Carter came in, not because of that. But the Reagan administration...well, they came in with...I think he was the Assistant Secretary of State, Bill Bowdler, I think he had 24 hours to clean his desk out, and get out, or maybe it wasn't even...

Q: I think it was less than that.

JOVA: But he I know was embittered ever since. In other words there was quite a lot of vindictiveness, and that includes several ambassadors and senior officers in the field. Bob White was one. They couldn't wait to get him out. But as I recall, it was all done in a very...after all, Nixon was part of the establishment already, and certainly Secretary

Rogers was very much Washington. Charlie Meyer was in this little establishment, a lot of culture and that sort of thing, but at the same time he also felt very akin to the Foreign Service.

Q: What does the job of ambassador to the OAS...it may have changed, but from '69 to '73, what essentially did the American ambassador to the OAS do?

JOVA: The ambassador has his mission, the size of a small embassy. Just like the ambassador to the United Nations on a smaller, more homogeneous scale. The council itself would meet every Wednesday, if I recall rightly, unless there was some emergency —that's a permanent council composed of the ambassadors accredited. During the rest of the week the work was carried on by committees, which the ambassador might or might not attend or participate in.

When I came, I think I was the first career person to be ambassador in many, many years. The staff had fallen into the pattern of doing the committee work themselves, except I also found out there's where the stew is cooked. Once it is prepared and presented to the permanent council, its already cooked you might say—debated and picked apart a little bit —but its much better to participate yourself in committee work. So little by little I did more and more of that in one committee or another. You can't cover them all, and you can't have the background on all of them. Some of the people were Foreign Service officers that were rotated. Some of the Foreign Service officers for one reason or another had stayed there a long time. Some were civil service. And, of course, those people who had permanence there were very, very valuable. Sometimes they were a little bit frozen in their positions, but they remembered exactly why the United States had such and such a position, and the reasons for it. It wasn't just based on whims. So they were good.

Of course, when I arrived, it was sort of a difficult thing. Remember I had just come from Honduras, the famous football games had taken place, with the difficulties between both countries had arisen.

Q: We're talking about the soccer war.

JOVA: Yes. I was there for the games. As a matter of fact the farewell party that the president of Honduras gave for us, a dinner at his house, was the same day that the return game in Salvador was taking place. During that dinner they were bringing him in notices—telephone calls, or from the police, or from the frontier guards, etc.—of what had gone on, what was going on, on the route between San Salvador and Honduras.

I know that some of our embassy servants had gone to that game, and the next morning they were still white with terror. I remember our cook and some of the others saying, “Thank God we're back home safely. It was terrible. Our buses were tumbled, cars were turned over, windows were broken in the buses by the Salvadorans.” After that the Hondurans started tightening up on the legal residents of Salvador that were in Honduras, expelling some of them, taking away land they were squatting. And as a result of that, or stemming from that, there was this international tension, and then actual military hostilities. Of course, the Salvadorans claimed that Hondurans committed genocide, and violated the human rights of their people.

I spoke a little earlier about the population growth, the over population, scarcity of jobs, and of course, to the Salvadorans Honduras had been a great big escape valve. It was easy to cross the frontier and certain population had moved in. And the fact that these people were being sent back, and the perspective of this going on in major numbers, was very frightening to the Salvadoran establishment because this would be unsettling to the civil life of their country. And this is one of the things that stimulated them to take strong action, military action.

Q: In a way it is somewhat a reflection, except on a smaller scale, but its important as with Mexico which you dealt with later on.

JOVA: The same thing. This business of transfers of human elements are very emotional, but also have economic and political considerations.

I arrived there. The war had already started. I wasn't accredited yet, it took a while. I was advised not to appear in the council, perhaps I was too over judicious. And again perhaps the staff was kind of over protective, and maybe they'd as soon not have the new boss around, so I was working in the office most of the time, until they rushed me through the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee. I remember it was a quick and painless approval with Senator Fulbright in the chair. True, the usual searching questions. And then my swearing in was almost like Calvin Coolidge's in the Under Secretary's office. They brought up a bible, and they swore me in, just myself and Charlie Meyer. So then I was finally accredited.

I guess I had already gone to Galo Plaza, who was then the Secretary General, and then started participating fully in the proceedings of the mediation consultation. Because, you see, as this had been a wartime situation, something which threatened the peace of the hemisphere, the permanent council was transformed, a meeting of Foreign Ministers was called. And that in turn is what started the mediation and conciliation between the two countries. And then when the Foreign Ministers left, their representatives would wear other hats for the meeting on this particular subject. There would be a meeting under the Rio Treaty, rather than just under the charter of the OAS.

John Ford—now dead, you know, died a couple of years ago—was the next senior person. The equivalent of Deputy Chief of Mission. He had done a wonderful job and of course he had an engaging personality, and boundless energy. Almost too much sometimes. He'd live on nerves for days at a time when one of these crises would start. But basically he did a wonderful job. I gradually played a greater and greater role in this because as you know we had peace missions. There was a special committee inside the OAS, under the Rio Treaty, set up to carry out the whole function of trying to bring peace about in Central America. We sent military observers from various countries of Latin America, including

the United States, which provided the airlift. The first thing was to get them to retreat out of Honduran territory. And second to make sure they weren't back in, this took two years. All the time I was there, this was a part of an ongoing process, but certainly for the first two years. And actually peace didn't come about until after my five years in the OAS had finished. The actual formal peace didn't take place until after I had retired from the Service. Before that a modus vivendi had been worked out, but of course with the borders closed. And that wrecked the Common Market which had been progressing remarkably well in Central America. Instead of having the five countries with populations of 2 million to 4-5 million people, this brought all together a population of 12 million. Now I think its 20 million for Central America. And now they're laboriously trying to rebuild that Common Market —Central America Common Market. First with the borders closed, and the difficulties between El Salvador and Honduras, and then after that with the Nicaragua revolution, the Sandinistas coming in, you might say Central America was physically divided. Incredibly enough some Common Market trade continued right on through, and now, of course, its coming back.

Q: How did you see your role, both professionally as a job, but also of the United States, in dealing with this? I would think there would be a problem with the Colossus to the north. You don't want to weigh in too heavily, yet at the same time probably as much as anybody we don't want turmoil in that area. How did you operate, both your instructions and your visceral reaction as to how to deal with this?

JOVA: The instructions were trying to maintain that low profile. Sometimes you're almost forcing the Latins to take the decisions for themselves, and then participating. Naturally sometimes that forcing was less visible, or more visible. I remember in my first days after being sworn in, going to a meeting and in the Under Secretary's office was Elliot Richardson, and some impassioned people were making cases for armed intervention. He said, “Look, that's the last thing...it seems to me that should be reserved, the last thing for the United States to intervene there militarily. Let's work, continue the strength of the OAS, work behind the scenes, but certainly not put American troops into a place where there's

no airfield right there, and service, etc., in a neighborhood quarrel." Well, that was wise, and I think that calmed our more excitable people down a bit.

And we were eager to have Central American participation, and also Argentina, Ecuador. I can't remember who else but certainly the Argentine ambassador, Raul Quijano, after that he was Foreign Minister for a while in his own country, and then the United Nations. The last I heard he was ambassador to Paraguay which, of course, is very important for Argentina. But he was so judicious, and so smart, but so level headed and so calm, and he was very Nordic.

So I think that was all something that the OAS, the inter American system, can be proud of; and the fact that the Secretary General, Galo Plaza, was a person who enjoyed full respect here in Washington.

Q: In this particular type of negotiation, you're looking at an international organization under pressure, rather than dealing with the normal course of events. What was your evaluation of how some of the countries acted? Which were the most helpful, and were there some that played a kind of spoiler's role; that maybe didn't have much responsibility, but liked to mess in, and weren't too basically helpful in this particular thing. Would you come away with any impressions?

JOVA: Mexico frequently played that role.

Q: I was fishing for that.

JOVA: On this particular issue, Mexico was on the same commission and the then ambassador to the OAS was sort of the wiseman of the organization, the oldest, most senior member, and very judicious, and basically pro-American, etc., and at that time their president was relatively pro-American. Then even the attitude of this wonderful Mexican ambassador started to change slightly. But they played a useful role also. This was something the whole hemisphere was united on. Then, of course, the fact that we were

not thrusting ourselves forward too much. We really played it more routinely. Who knows? You can examine some careers, and say, what did they do? What big accomplishment did they do in the world affairs and international diplomacy. But others deserve even more commendation, those that have managed to smooth over conflicts, and helped solve conflicts quietly, deserve almost more credit. I think I played a good role in helping resolve that, and various other conflicts. It was a period though of intense anti-Americanism in the hemisphere. Remember the Alliance for Progress was dying down. The north-south tensions were stronger.

Q: Why were these north-south tensions stronger?

JOVA: Well, the division between developed and non-developed countries were exploited for many years to oblige the developed countries, to give to the underdeveloped. This was one of our main objectives in all this negotiation, to oppose that. What is ours is ours to give, and this can't be required of us—the economic rights and obligations of states. (I was already in Mexico at that time.) They tried to make that a doctrine that would have universal backing, and we had very big backing from third world countries, the first world countries didn't want to find themselves burdened with an obligation to give aid, even though we were giving it. The U.S., in any case, was giving rather generously at that time.

But the OAS served as a useful escape valve because the annual meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the General Assembly, the Foreign Ministers. Every Foreign Minister practically had to get up and make his established diatribe about the injustices of the world; the rich and the poor; and the United States and the others; trying to live off the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. A problem, I think, that was worldwide, but here it was naturally more against the U.S. rather than against...we were the ones that had. And that, of course, would make some people in the Department very mad. It was different with Secretary Rogers anyway. He didn't understand Latins. He felt there was too much hot air, and then to listen to all this anti-Americanism. I remember, I used to say, “Remember what Don Quixote said once, what Santos said too, when they were attacked by dogs,

or unfriendly villages, or something of that sort of thing," and Don Quixote said, "Shall we mount Santos?" and then rode off quietly without even replying. And, of course, the Arabs have the saying that the dogs bark when the caravan marches on. So some of these things you have to realize were just part of the game.

Q: Did you find it in a way easier to make, within our own administration, the political people understand more than say the professional diplomats? I'm just wondering because politicians are used to this duality. You get up on the hustings and you say these things and yet you go out and have dinner together afterwards.

JOVA: People would usually understand. In March it worked pretty well, and there was involvement by all parties. It wasn't the situation later on, long afterwards, that we had the other Central American crises. You know, why did the OAS pay attention, and mix in with Salvador civil war? Of course, in Nicaragua the OAS took an enormous step forward and abandoned its almost immemorial stance of not intervening in domestic disputes.

Q: I wonder, how did you treat this almost endemic, but more heated anti-Americanism of this time? What did you do behind the scenes about these almost pro forma anti-American speeches? These things just don't take place in a vacuum.

JOVA: No, but mind you, the press pays little attention to what goes on in the OAS, most of the time anyway. Sure, we had all kinds of conversations on these approaches. We'd ask them, our ambassadors, sometimes we'd blame it on our respective ambassadors to the OAS. Then they'd complain to the ambassador to the White House because after all his department is to do what he could do, and that's why they have separate commissions. Or they'd ask the Foreign Minister to take it up with our ambassador in Argentina, for instance, to take it up with one of the ministers, and they'd say nice things. But, of course, the Foreign Ministers themselves would say such things. I know it would disturb Secretary Rogers, and it would disturb everybody. But some of it you lived with. After it was over with, it all depended upon what collaboration, cooperation, there was.

Incidentally, this seems to have gotten better by the way. Despite the problems with the debts and all that sort of thing the last few years apparently there's much...I don't say its perfect, but there's more maturity in this regard right now on the part of the Latin American nations. Because there has always been that love-hate relationship. So many things in the United States to admire, and they recognize that they need us, and we need them to a certain extent. Although here was one of the problems. Kissinger anyway, “I can't be bothered with them. What difference does it make?”

Q: ...National Security Adviser.

JOVA: Exactly, had other things on his mind. It was difficult to get him to focus, and he would apt to be rather flippant on this. I remember him saying, “What is Chile?” “Well, we're having trouble with Chile, as the result of the Allende election.” “Chile is a dagger point right at the heart of Antarctica.”

Q: I used to use this when I was with the Board of Examiners, and taking new candidates. I used to quote this, but using not Chile but Latin America, and say, “What does this reflect?” and let people develop that one.

JOVA: He became somewhat more interested when he became Secretary of State. But he had something blow up on him when he said, “What we want is the Latin Americans to get together and establish unified positions and then we can negotiate with them.” So that happened, unfortunately, and he found that even more difficult. But at least the Central American thing was, in a way, good because it involved everybody, ourselves included, in a common purpose; at least on that subject.

There were other things that divided us, such as the fishing rights. You know, some things the Latins had been fighting for, we were adamant on...three mile limit, no fishing rights beyond that, control of another 12 mile limit. When the Latins started...because the Latins are really addicted to doctrines. I think that was one of their inventions, whether it was

100 miles or the continental shelf, I can't recall right now, but by golly that has become accepted now. And that was a source of great quarrels and battles, and we were actually accused by Ecuador in this case of all sorts of violations, and brought up, I think, under the Rio Treaty. Accusations of violating their sovereign rights because of the tuna boats, and of course our tuna boat lobby in Los Angeles, or in San Diego, is very important. But strangely enough, we've come to recognize that, and now we push it.

Q: You were mentioning Kissinger who I guess during this entire time was the National Security Adviser, was not paying much attention to National Security Council. Did you have any feeling during this particular time, and reflections from Nixon about Latin America?

JOVA: Yes, and they were apt to be wise, and involved, and perceptive. I attended an occasional meeting between him and some inter-American officials. I remember being struck by that; that he certainly was perceptive; and judicious; putting the onus back and sometimes redefining. Mind you, Kissinger became more and more interested in this, when he was Secretary of State. By the time he became Secretary of State, or shortly thereafter, I was named to Mexico and he was the Secretary of State while I was in Mexico. There was no question that Nixon had a good grasp. Of course, he had suffered in Latin America too, you will recall.

Q: Caracas when he was Vice President.

JOVA: ...played around with the Rockefeller Mission at the beginning of the Nixon administration. The Rockefeller Mission started out that way with increasing disturbances, etc., and he had to cancel his visit to some countries, I think Peru, and became less useful. He visited us in Honduras shortly before that and I was already named Ambassador to the OAS when he came. I'm not sure if we covered that visit.

Q: This is Nelson Rockefeller.

JOVA: When I was ambassador to Honduras, and the Nixon administration had just begun. One of the first things that President Nixon did was to ask Governor Rockefeller to carry out this mission through Latin America. They started in Mexico, and then I guess he went to Guatemala, Salvador, and then he came to us in Honduras. There would be disputes about the role of the ambassadors. Some ambassadors said it was impossible that he call on the president without me. “I am the representative of the President of the United States.” Some of these ambassadors were still there from the previous administration, all of us really.

Q: The Johnson administration.

JOVA: Yes. Maybe they had one or two in place. They may have rushed down there. I remember when he was first named, and I sensed this. I sent a cable saying, “Look, I'm a resident of New York state,” I still was at that time, “and I'm a graduate of Dartmouth, so I can assure you... I know you're an admirer because of all your interest in Latin America.” Which of course his interest had been long, right from Dartmouth on. Then, of course, the role that he and his brothers had in Central America relations in New York. “You can count on my cooperation, and discretion in any way.”

So this is the way it was. First the advance party came, and then he came, and we got along beautifully—the whole group. It was stressful, as all these things are. First of all lodging them. Their doctrine was not to stay at the embassy so they could be independent of the ambassador. Well, we lined up what we had downtown, the “New Hotel,” and the other hotel was still a dream, it hadn't been built.

I told the advance party, “This is up to the Governor. He can stay where he likes, and this is what we have reserved.” Mind you, the cathedral bells marked the hour from 4:00 a.m. mass onwards. “I know that he wants to be independent, but we also have this, and there's room,” and showed them the guest part of the embassy residence. “There's room here for meetings, and for being separate, and I assure you that he need involve me as the

ambassador only to the extent that he wants." And I'm thinking it over, and exchanging communications with Washington, and he opted to stay in the embassy, and the rest of the mission stayed downtown complaining about the facilities. And, of course, there were demonstrations coming in, whipped up in no time at all.

Q: This was, I assume, by the left.

JOVA: Oh, yes, the communist movement of some sort, but obviously organized. It went on with ever increasing crescendo in Mexico, but you know they can control things pretty well there. And in Honduras, I remember there being masses, crowds all the way in from the airport, and you were doubly glad to be staying up on the hill in the embassy. And in one meeting early on, the first or second day, the troops controlling the people in the main square, fired, and were foolish enough...they weren't really trained to control, and they killed a young man, which was unfortunate. It needn't have happened, and certainly we had nothing to do with it at all.

Q: What was Rockefeller trying to do? Was this just a sounding for the Nixon administration?

JOVA: This was a sounding for the Nixon administration, and it made very reasonable recommendations. At the end they sent telegrams to each country. They were very careful, I noticed, for his staff to send telegrams also...separate telegrams, one to the State Department for the President, another one to Kissinger.

Q: I'm not sure how much we treated on this, but was this much different from when Johnson came down? He came down in 1968 to Honduras, didn't he?

JOVA: Yes, he did.

Q: ...as President, July 8th. How did that visit go?

JOVA: The real substance of that visit took place in Salvador, where he met and had joint meetings with all the Central American countries. He wanted, incidentally, to bring the Mexican president also. I remember I was up in the Department on consultation while this was being hatched, presiding over a promotion board. I remember being asked that question, is this a good idea, or not? Because, of course, Johnson had a special relationship with Mexico. I remember saying I recommended against it. “Central America gets little enough attention from the United States government, and specifically the White House. This is their moment in the sun. We're already casting a shadow, if you will, by sending them all to Salvador to kill five birds with one stone. Bring the Mexican president and I think you're going to have a two-star opera there at the top, and all the poor Central American presidents as spear carriers.” I said, “Let's do it separately,” although the idea was to involve Mexico more in Central American affairs so it would take its responsibility. That became very troublesome later on, but that was the theory behind that. And they desisted from that. So those meetings took place there and the five ambassadors went to Salvador, were there for the two nights. They went very well with the usual speeches, etc., and the individual meetings with each president.

What sticks in my mind then is that Lady Bird took the microphone, and she spoke better than anybody. She's the only one who came through, I thought, like a normal, likeable, warm-hearted human being. I was so impressed by that, the impromptu address that she gave. Did I mention the gifts?

Q: No.

JOVA: Well, then he said, “All right, we're going to take you all home. I'll deposit you in Air Force 1 in each of your capitals, it was like a milk run, they spent half an hour or so and had a little ceremony. I flew back to Tegucigalpa to get all those things ready because the next day he was arriving. And, of course, the airport in Tegucigalpa was not really very safe...very unsafe actually for a big plane, so they landed in San Pedro la Sula, the second city which has, as it's flat land, and still has, a much better airport. So the question

of setting up a boutique gift shop, handicrafts, protocol ceremony and all that, went off very well.

By the way, our message was, “The President collects cuff links. He's on a cuff link spree, particularly if they have coins but are not representative of the country. Get cuff links as a gift and the slush fund will take care of it.” Well, in other places you might be able to find things like that, but in Honduras you wouldn't. The only thing they had was something rather good, and these were in gold nuggets. So I hesitated to spend that much money. It doesn't sound like very much today, whatever it was, but I got them and showed them to whoever was in ARA/EX who was traveling with him. “It was a lot more than we were planning.” In other words, it was instead of being $50, it was $125 or something, “but here's your money.” Well, at that ceremony, on the way out to the plane, came the President, greeted him, etc., and they were all given a chance to go to the gift shop. And on the way out to the plane I said, “Mr. President, I have a little remembrance here. I understand that you collect cuff links.” I remember he didn't even look at me, and this great enormous paw of a hand reached out and I put it in his hand, he put it in his pocket, and he kept right on walking down to the plane, we all saluted and he left. Today the cuff links would be worth much more. That enormous hand and not even looking at it, just snuck it in his pocket.

Q: Then back to the OAS.

JOVA: The Rockefeller mission was a different thing altogether. The Johnson visit was more protocol-wise in Salvador, and protocol-wise in each of the stops. Naturally he was a very outgoing person, and Lady Bird was a very warm person. The Rockefeller mission was stopping in Honduras itself, and there were conversations between staff, particularly myself, but I mean my senior colleagues with the mission, with the Governor. They had talks with the ministers, with the president.

On the following day, let's say, the Rockefeller staff said, “It's so confusing downtown with the bells, and mobs, do you think it would be possible to have our meetings here at the residence? And the best thing would be a breakfast meeting.” I think Pamela rose to the occasion beautifully. Pamela and the cook went down and they brought out oranges, and cartons of eggs and breakfast for 40-odd people was ready—fresh pressed orange juice, scrambled eggs, the whole thing.

I was already named to the OAS. And when I arrived at the office of the OAS, there was an enormous box all wrapped in white tissue paper. It was from Governor Rockefeller, addressed to Pamela and me—Pamela specifically—thanking both of us. The present, by the way, was the present he was unable to give to the president of Peru, a Steuben plate with the birth sign of each president.

Q: Well, back to the OAS when you were there. How valuable did you find it having an embassy? Or was it a nuisance to be the chief of a mission in Washington?

JOVA: It was good, and it was bad. Naturally if we were abroad the American representative to the OAS would have had all sorts of privileges, such as a car, a driver, etc. It was a different thing. Even if we had had our offices separate from the State Department, it might have been somewhat different. The offices of the mission were in the State Department, a beautiful suite, with a big sign over the door saying what it was. It was like a little embassy, if you wish, a chancery. And, of course, that did have the advantage that we were right there with our fingers on the pulse of what was going on in the State Department, participating in the Secretary's weekly meeting, and also the Assistant Secretary's daily staff meeting.

Q: Assistant Secretary for Latin America.

JOVA: Exactly, so that you were in touch with what was going on, and not waiting for a telegram to come in instructing you to do something that was perhaps unreal, as frequently

those instructions that you get are. And naturally we would have meetings there with other ambassadors, invite them in and convert the office to a little reception room before a lousy lunch, but still a lunch in the State Department. It had all those advantages.

You were also frequently given other duties in the State Department, something to do with Latin America, to sit on another board. And that distracted you from your main job. But at the same time it was also an advantage because it kept you in touch with everything, and gave you certain stature and credibility with your colleagues. There was always a little bit of jealousy down the hall between the Assistant Secretary position and his staff, and the mission staff. You know, who are we under, etc. Of course, we had to play that carefully, but we were a mission. We had had our own automobile and driver, and that sort of thing, but the minute my predecessor left, he was a political appointee, Sol Linowitz—when you have a politico in, they get everything, but the day he left they took the car away, etc. But I had access to the pool, which is not the same thing but still could use a car. I guess they cut the representation funds, but we had our own funds, which would make sometimes the ARA itself a little bit jealous and uneasy. I think those we got through IO, not through ARA.

Q: IO being International Organizations Bureau.

JOVA: Some of my successors thought it was subordinating themselves to go to the Assistant Secretary for ARA staff meetings.

Q: Cut themselves out from a very valuable source of information.

JOVA: That's what I thought. I thought it was much better to go, and be part of a team. And, of course, you're a little bit subservient, you have to be, but more of a collaborator. Two institutions, like an AID mission in an embassy, there's always a little bit of friction. John Ford was so good at that too, at working together with the top part of the bureau, and we didn't get enough money to make them that jealous.

One of the things we did, and we did it jointly, but we instituted it. They were celebrating the 100th anniversary of the first Latin American accredited to Washington.

Q: Probably 1822 was when we started recognizing Latin American countries, so that would have been the 150th.

JOVA: This guy lived and died in Philadelphia. He was accredited there, he had a home, I can't remember exactly the particular events. So we decided to invite all the Latin American ambassadors to go to Philadelphia for a meeting in Independence Hall, which dates right from that period, and have a meeting of the Permanent Council in Philadelphia. At that time it was the first time the Permanent Council had ever met outside of its seat in Washington, except when they have gone to a foreign nation. But in those cases they were meeting as a General Assembly of the Foreign Ministers. And ARA got a little bit jealous, so we did that jointly. We had a private railway car attached to a regular train, AMTRAK was just starting, a wonderful car. And we packed a champagne breakfast, I suppose, on board. The Secretary of State came—for a long time there was a debate whether he'd come or not. He came and he stayed for the morning session. Secretary Rogers spoke very well. The reply was given by a representative of the Latins, the ambassador of Venezuela was a great orator. Mind you, Latin American oratory is quite different from our oratory of today. In other words, this was like going back to the old days. I think the Secretary or someone who hadn't been exposed to Latin America might be a little bit shocked. But the end result was great.

I was also chairman of the Council for that period, so I opened the session. Our gift to the city of Philadelphia was a transcript of the Civil War diary of a great great uncle of mine who was born in Cuba but raised and came as a child, and was an officer in the Union Army. And Philadelphia gave the traditional ceramic punch bowl with the views of Independence Hall.

So, in other words, the morning was an U.S. mission organized event, then lunch time and the afternoon was ARA, and again more exchanges and speeches with the mayor and that sort of thing. And then a visit to St. Mary's church where the guy was buried. Again, a Catholic church—the oldest Catholic church in Philadelphia, and then there were more speeches there, again from Charlie Meyer, who was the Assistant Secretary, and the Latins returning.

Q: I think you're pointing out the fact that when Foreign Service officers, or anybody dealing with foreign affairs in our business, is called upon to exercise diplomacy, you're greatest real efforts in diplomacy are within your own organization, within the Department of State. If you want to get things done there, it is much more important because in some ways diplomacy is cut and dried with other countries. I mean, they have their things, you know what they have to do, but to really get things done within an organization, you have to exercise real diplomacy.

JOVA: That is true. And that has been my experience...with many others, more experienced diplomats than myself, is that the role of an American ambassador usually turns out to be a dual role. If you're the American ambassador to Honduras, not only are you representing your country there, etc., and trying to solve problems and getting across the U.S. point of view, but your role also is to try to get the Honduran point of view back to Washington. Because they usually haven't left more inadequate representation up here, and the president is much more apt to pay attention to the American ambassador, than to his representative up in Washington. Certainly we can get the message back to the State Department better and more clearly enunciated, and put into perspective, than the foreign ambassador who naturally is making an emotional plea for his own country. But putting these things in a perspective; showing the problems that an American position would create down there; within the context of reasonable objectives to the extent possible; but also saying what is reasonable; what isn't reasonable; what kind of problems it would

create. How can those problems be, if not solved, at least ameliorated. That's why I think an American ambassador is doubly useful in playing this double role.

And, of course, this was true in the OAS too where you had to reflect the point of view of the hemisphere, if you will, and to put into perspective the problems, but also the constructive parts of it. The fact that it was a wonderful way to be in touch with the thought, the feelings of the entire hemisphere...you know, a lot of people wanted to abolish our mission to the OAS, and at this time it was purely a Latin thing. But on the other hand, it gives us a chance to reply on the same level because this is one of the organizations where we're all sitting around the table at the same level. One of the things that we can all joke about over coffee, or have serious conversations at their level, rather than the United States being patronizing, or more authoritarian from the heights talking down to them. We could have dialogues, both formal and informal, on all sorts of subjects. We also can note, hopefully, what is going on in all the hemisphere much better than...in a different aspect, of course...but the State Department doesn't depend only on what the embassies tell them, but here we're hearing it every day.

I remember having an argument with Charlie Meyer. He always said that if the OAS didn't exist, we'd have to invent it. His successor was all against the OAS. He just magnified these differences. “We should get out of it.” It was Bill Rogers—the other Bill Rogers, the younger one. Not William P. Rogers, the Secretary of State, but William D. Rogers, a lawyer from here, who after that was Under Secretary for Economic Affairs when Kissinger became Secretary of State. I remember saying, “Look, at all the problems we have here with civil rights, and things like that, why does everybody get so mad...the Jews and blacks want to be a member of one of these clubs, and we are criticized for excluding them. Because it cuts out the possibility of their dealing with people on equal terms, or perhaps doing favorable business. Do we want to purposely deal ourselves out of this opportunity, of being a charter member in fact of this Inter-American club?” He couldn't answer that, but he always resented the fact that I said that.

So we stayed in. I think I said I was the first professional Foreign Service officer to be ambassador to the OAS, and, of course, we did have the famous one for a very short time.

Q: Ellsworth Bunker.

JOVA: Ellsworth Bunker who had been ambassador to the OAS when he played a key role in the Dominican crisis. I used to, frequently, go to him for advice. He was always very helpful to me. And he did speak Spanish, by the way. Well, the same thing happened after I left. My predecessor, Sol Linowitz didn't speak Spanish. My successors didn't speak a word of Spanish, didn't know anything about it. Well, I'm sure they knew something about it because the first one had been the chairman of the House Committee on Latin America. His successor, when the Democrats came in, was Ambassador Gale McGee who didn't speak Spanish, but at least had a background as a historian, and had been chairman at least of the subcommittee on Latin America. So he knew Latins.

Q: He was tied down to the Panama Canal anyway. He was sort of the point man running around making speeches, if I recall.

JOVA: Exactly, both of them, and they had an American political background which was used for that. He was the point man, and sometimes would be sent jointly to missions of the Republicans and the Democrats. McCormack came next, who again was an economist, but he was a Jesse Helms ideologue. We became very good friends, so I see lots of the good things that he did, but he also had a lot to his detriment, beginning with the fact that he didn't really understand Latins, or speak Spanish, and also didn't have the confidence of the Department of State itself. He was always felt to be a Helms' man.

Q: Jesse Helms being a senator from North Carolina—putting this in historical context—who is extremely right wing conservative, who had almost his own policy towards Latin America, as opposed to Republican or Democratic administrations.

JOVA: That's true. Mind you, Ambassador McCormack had also gone to college and school in Europe and Switzerland, and had a Ph.D. He had a lot more breadth than people gave him credit for; but he did have his ideological hangups; and there was discomfort in this regard I'd say, even in the Republican part of the Department of State. But then more recently the Bush administration named Ambassador Einaudi to be ambassador to the OAS, and here is somebody who knew Latin America thoroughly, who really had sort of a Latin background. The first time I met him was in Peru where he was sent down to lecture to the Peruvian military. Later on he came into the Department, and he was in Policy Planning for the Latin American Bureau. I think it was one of the best choices that could have been made.

Q: Did the problem about funding from the United States to the OAS come up while you were there? Or did that come up later? Now we haven't been paying our dues.

JOVA: Yes, but we've begun paying back some of our dues. It was terrible for a long time. In my case, it was always a tussle to get the funding, particularly on the voluntary funds, and anything to do with cultural programs, which, of course, is one of the most useful areas to collaborate in really, and it cost so little. I'm a little bit prejudice because years later, after I retired from the Service, I was elected to be a member of the Inter-American Committee on Culture which is one of the permanent programs in that field. And I was then reelected two years later, and I was chairman of it for the year. It was a nice way to be back in touch, or participating in the Inter-American system. I was president in the Meridian House after all, and that was an international culture institution.

Q: This, and its reflection elsewhere in the Latin American scene, but from your vantage point in the OAS, so often culture becomes the province of the intellectuals. The intellectuals, at least in the era we're talking about, tend to be leftists, and anti-American. Was this a problem when you were there, the cultural anti-American left?

JOVA: Oh, yes, we were very worried about cultural imperialism in the United States. But there again, this was a way you could collaborate with those people on a wonderful ground, and where we finally could persuade U.S. government to give something. Those funds came from AID. And to give something to culture on the justification that it had something to do with development. Whether it was developing tourism, for instance, or developing archival records, etc. So we started to get little contributions from the voluntary fund for culture. This is while I was still there as ambassador. And actually my deputy, one of my two deputies, Henry Catto, covered that area, education and cultural, which had its own council, and did a very good job. And its interesting that years later—after that he was ambassador to Salvador; and then he was Chief of Protocol; then, of course, the Democrats came in and he was nothing; then he came back in with the Reagan administration. But this administration made him ambassador to the United Kingdom, so he always said that he learned a lot from me which was his first job. And I got him the title of ambassador over great opposition. And now, as you know, he's been appointed...

Q: ...head of USIA.

JOVA: So there again this experience for him was a very useful one. He learned more about Latin America, and he learned more about political maneuvering; but the fact that he was dealing with the educational and cultural aspect of it in the OAS in those days; well, obviously, that gives him a background for what he is doing today. There is always the problem of getting money, but we got it. Later the U.S. became tighter, and meaner, and used money because the OAS wasn't doing what it wanted. It was a time of budget cutting after all. So we became way, way in arrears. Well, with a delegation that pays 66% of the whole thing; for us going into arrears and not paying dues to which we were committed; really skewed the process terribly and made them much poorer; and it created a lot of animosity.

Q: Today is March 27, 1992. This is a continuing series of interviews with Ambassador Jova.

We're still at your time when you were ambassador to the OAS, Organization of American States from 1979 to '83, and we talked about some issues, our last being the funding problem. Bringing up some of the outside other issues, what was the role of Cuba? I mean the Cuban issue while you were there.

JOVA: Cuba had been out for a long time. Actually, legally it was still a member. There was one group of countries, and it varied...what their individual governments became, if they were democratic, military, or whatever. Some were adamant about keeping Cuba out, and some were increasingly eager to bring it in. We, of course, didn't want it in. Brazilians were even more adamant, they didn't even want to discuss our position openly. The Bolivians, which had a strong government at that time, were like the Brazilians. However, they did not have the necessary two-thirds vote to overthrow a previously taken decision. You can take a decision by a majority, and of course it was much more than a majority by a lot. Long before my time, I don't remember that. I remember the Haiti vote was crucial, and we gave them an airfield and the port was sort of a direct result of their favorable vote for us to exclude Cuba.

Q: Did you ever feel within our delegation thinking about having a debate whether Cuba should be in or out? I'm not talking about the official policy, but if you could get them in, its better, to use a diplomatic term, have them pissing outside the tent rather than being inside. Was this a subject of debate, or were you pretty well all agreed? and in your own personal self?

JOVA: You know, you get carried away, and you can't help being part of the course you're living in, and living in that culture. You could see an open debate on the subject, and possibly having different views, which of course was quite different from the Nixon White House. And one couldn't help but take the case of Yugoslavia that had become so much

more civilized. The fact they wanted tourism, trade, which had begun there, which had opened it up. And even I, as you know, I'm partly Cuban in origin, by instinct and family tradition I was strongly against that. Whether into the system or not, at least changing the relationship so there would be travel, tourism, more openness, etc., it would make it more difficult for Castro to stay in power—freedom of information, freedom to travel. Plus the fact it would remove the bogey bear of our blockade. He could blame everything on our blockade. So its easy to get, I guess what people at the White House would call woolly-headed about something like that. And the opinion there is very much what it is now, keep the blockade up. Sooner or later he will fall, and the harder he falls, the better for everybody. Now, bringing him into the OAS, that was more debatable, and our colleagues said everything is going to be confrontational. We're going to get a lot less done. I'm not sure we were getting that much done at that time, but probably it was true. In any case, that's purely speculation. We changed our policy later to a certain extent. After all, even then we had a Cuban Interest Section, or did we?

Q: I think it came a little later.

JOVA: That came in Carter's time, which is certainly very interesting. Then we did a lot of things people were recommending we do, but it didn't really change the situation. We established a Cuban Interest Section, we had more dialogue. The Cubans invited me to go down, and we were going to go. This was well after I retired, and Pamela came down with one of those terrible viruses the night before we were to leave. I think the officers expected afterwards that must have been a scheme on my part to say yes, and then at the last minute to say no. But fortunately some members of the Cuban embassy had that virus also, so some of them understood.

Q: What was the attitude of the Brazilians, and the Bolivians, and some of the other more hardline ones? Argentina? What was their objection to letting Castro in? Did they have different reasons than we did?

JOVA: The Argentines, the Brazilians, and the Bolivians, all those had had military coups. They had military governments in power, and rightist military governments. Peru, by the way, had a military government but they were sort of liberal and leftist. The Argentines, for instance, even the word pluralistic society was enough to send them up the wall. In other words, they didn't want any society in which the extreme leftist participated.

Q: Did you ever say the obvious? "Well, if you fellows, in each of your countries, would get your countries in better shape, you could probably do a lot better. So if we have an obligation, first you have to meet your obligation as a government to do better within your own country." Did you ever use that?

JOVA: Oh, yes. It was always trotted out. But then don't forget they throw back in our face, "But those are just your friends. Its fine for you to talk that way here, but don't forget the ones that are more pro-U.S.A. in our respective countries, Panama, for instance, are those upper classes that vote right, and live well."

Q: Did you feel (in our Latin policy, not including Cuba), were there people in the White House, or friends of the White House—I'm thinking of Bebe Roboso, and others who were friends of Nixon, but other groups that played a fairly major role when there was a problem. All of a sudden they would weigh in from the White House. Sort of special interests, or something like that.

JOVA: The "against Cuba" thing was a national policy. And I'd say most Americans probably favored it. Sure the liberals didn't, some of the newspaper people didn't, that sort of thing.

Q: This is a letter which Ambassador Jova is giving to me dated June 20, 1972, the White House Washington.

“Dear Mr. Ambassador:You and your staff did a superb job during a recent OAS debate on Cuba. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely, Richard Nixon”

Did we have any policy at the time in the OAS; a problem with the fact that a significant number of the major governments in Latin America in the OAS, were military dictatorships? Or was this not either a political or an economic, or any other kind of a particular problem for us?

JOVA: Oh, yes. Human rights were invented in the Carter period. A national preoccupation of that existed long before, and certainly our preoccupation with Brazil was very deep in that regard. All these things were coming out, about the tortures, etc., that the Brazilian opposition people had been subjected to, particularly the extreme leftists, including Catholic leftists. Now that wasn't something that we were campaigning against in the OAS forum. After all, those were internal factors so one had to be presumably more respectful. But in fact we would invoke that sometimes when they'd ask us about something that was going on in the United States. I remember raising my hand, and saying, “Wait a minute. That is an internal problem. It is true that those share croppers are very sad and our government is working on it, but that's our problem, and none of your business.” Well, I learned that from them, because it was not something that would be discussed there. Keep in mind that in other respects Brazil was very important to us. Kissinger felt that Brazil was really the big giant, and that was really the only thing we were worrying about in Latin America. So we had to be careful.

Q: What about the role of Mexico? Obviously we're going to get to Mexico in a little while, but was Mexico sort of the burr under the saddle every time you had to deal with anything?

JOVA: Yes, and no. That changed. Mexico naturally has its own policy. It was always very anti-imperialist, anti-intervention in the affairs of others. They were really the guardians of

those principles against the U.S.A. because they were the ones who had suffered most. On the other hand, on many things, if it was a debate, and we could be on Mexico's side, if we could be together, one could feel good in one's conscience, usually, in those days. Plus the fact that the Mexican ambassador was sort of the dean. He was one of the veterans of the Mexican foreign service, and a lot of his career had been spent in U.S.A., in border posts in his youth. And then he had also been ambassador to Japan, ambassador to the United Nations; the White House actually; and now he was the ambassador to the OAS; or permanent delegate. And, mind you, the vice dean of the OAS, the Nicaraguan, had been there longer, but the Mexican ambassador was the next in rank in seniority, and he was also much wiser, and more judicious, and had the universal respect of everybody, and affection also.

Q: I think an important thing about this relationship in the OAS, I don't want to over-characterize it and please correct me, the United States obviously had its policy because of our size, and might, but was Mexico as a major country the leader of the other side in most cases where we weren't all together?

JOVA: Yes, except that the Chilean delegation...Allende was still in. That would be the leader on some of the leftist ideas, and if Mexico were to join in with the judiciousness of the Mexican ambassador, and the judiciousness on many things of Mexican state policy, well then that became very formidable. Now if the Mexican, and people like that didn't join the Chilean, why then, as Don Quixote said, “The dogs bark when the caravan is leaving.” You know it doesn't matter too much. It might mean something but people would do their telegrams, I suppose, and there wasn't that much sympathy when he had gotten into an extreme mood.

Q: Were there any votes that the United States lost that caused some problems for you, and for your delegation, on issues?

JOVA: There were some things we couldn't win. Some things were unrealistic, to try to get the kind of vote there. Sometimes it was better to stop. But mostly we were able to block Cuba to the end. We were able to get support for several things, not necessarily extra-territoriality. I mean we won support and understanding on our China policy. They would not go along with the two-China policy. When the big reversal came...very interesting, the top officials came to make the presentations there, exposing what the motives for our change in policy, and our decision to move to recognize the Beijing Government, while at the same time maintaining a relationship with Taiwan. And for a while the implication was that there was going to be two Chinas. That went contrary to the principles that most of these delegations felt were the principles of international law. There ought to be one government representing one country. They made a big point about that. And mind you, many of those Latin American countries have continued to recognize Taiwan as China. Mexico, for instance.

Q: Were you there when Allende was overthrown?

JOVA: Yes, I was.

Q: How did that play in the OAS? It was a very controversial thing. Even today the role of the United States is a matter of great debate.

JOVA: Yes. There again there were legalistic positions. It was a change in government, therefore an internal matter. Chile promptly named an elderly, respected person as the Charg# D'Affaires to their mission to the OAS.

Q: Before we leave the OAS, what about Canada? Canada is part of the American hemispheres, but its not a member of the OAS, but the subject keeps coming up, why isn't it?

JOVA: It now is a member. They had a permanent observer. They and Spain were the first two to have that status, and 100% of their time, people devoted to that. The others little

by little named permanent observers, but there were some who would go occasionally. Now several of them have permanent observers. And the Canadians played a prominent role in some of the other technical aspects of the Inter-American system where they were members of CIAP, ECA, the agricultural system, etc., and in my day that is what it was. They were observers and everybody was hoping they would join, and we urged them to join. But it didn't happen in those days. It has happened, I'd say two years ago.

Q: Where was the objection? Was this Canadian objection in not joining it? This was not the OAS, or the United States.

JOVA: Oh, no. And if you went into the Council chamber, big, opposing carved arm chairs for each member left over from the old days, the Pan American Union, that included one chair with the Canadian coat of arms, a vacant chair was ready for them. No, it was purely a Canadian reluctance that said that they wanted the best of two worlds. They were giving quite a lot of assistance particularly in the English speaking Caribbean, and Haiti also, and in general, both government and Canadian religious groups. Mind you, they are now members and as far as I know they contribute and it has helped the budget an awful lot. The atmosphere, perhaps that's what decided them to enjoy the atmosphere of the OAS which is considerably more realistic, and lower keyed in that way in regard to anti-American rhetoric than it was in my days.

Q: Were there any major events that maybe we didn't touch on?

JOVA: Fisheries, and the territorial waters was a very important thing and we were accused by Ecuador, and we found ourselves in a little banco, there is a name for it too in English where the accused person sits.

Q: The defendants chair, I suppose.

JOVA: And that was taken up first in a General Assembly, or perhaps it started in the Permanent Council and then had to be finished in the General Assembly. So it was

uncomfortable, and I must say looking back, I think I handled that rather well. We gave a little bit, I can't remember what it was, papered it over, and the Ecuadorans after several weeks or months removed that charge against us.

Q: What was the main issue?

JOVA: We claimed a three mile limit, which we had then extended for our own purpose to a 12 mile limit. The three mile was territorial, 12 mile for control over the area. Well, the Latins took the lead in claiming the territorial shelf to determine the fishing rights; that they should be up to 100 miles, or whatever under the territorial shelf; plus such and such. That was heresy to us, and of course to our tuna fishing fleets in San Diego. They were politically very powerful. It was more than heresy. They first worked out this little sort of, “get us out of this jam,” and then I can't tell you what happened afterwards. But now this has become accepted all over, what we thought so ridiculous. The three mile was basically how far a cannon could be shot.

Q: It's one of those policies which seem to be cast in iron, but it turned out that the iron melted after a while.

JOVA: Like Catholics and eating fish on Friday, or eating meat on Friday.

Q: Yes, either that or all Catholics today are doomed because they're eating fish, or not eating fish on Friday. But at one time it was considered almost equivalent to a mark of sin.

Leaving that, could we go on to your next job which, of course, for any Foreign Service officer is an absolutely major and vital job. That was your appointment as ambassador to Mexico where you served from 1973 to 1977. How did you get the job? This is so often a political appointment. How did you hear about your assignment?

JOVA: I've always said when I was Chief of Personnel Operations people would ask me about those things. I said, “like the immaculate conception.” One doesn't know exactly

how it happened. Well, I was here and more directly involved. First of all, I was rather well considered. And if you looked around the field, who was in Latin America; who were the candidates; who were the top-notch people; I was better than most, believe it or not.

Q: No, no, but you're talking to somebody who has sort of a look of big deal. I mean being qualified for this job has never been a major consideration.

JOVA: My immediate predecessor was a career person, Bob McBride. That always makes it a little easier. And actually his immediate predecessor, Tony Freeman, was also a career person. So it wasn't like trampling new ground, although it had been held by politicals many times over in the past. I was approached with the possibility of being ambassador to Argentina, and mind you, this is an important position also.

Brazil was mentioned also, but that wasn't so immediately open but it was interesting because I did have some Portuguese having been stationed in Portugal, but Argentina was what they most wanted to fill at that particular moment. Mexico was also coming open.

I was told both were coming open, and I was told their hope was that they would propose Mexico and hope that I would go. I couldn't help but to be flattered. I mean I was awfully gratified, and perhaps fewer headaches. Don't kid yourself, the Peron regime had headaches too, plenty of headaches. But it was also very, very far, and I had children in school and in college still. Of course I would go there but to the extent that I can express a preference. I'd like to express a preference for Mexico partly because it is so much nearer, and then for my own personal situation. You know when you're far away you pay your way back, it's a terrible thing.

The next thing I knew it was Mexico. In my heart of hearts I had always wanted to go to Spain, but that didn't work out. Admiral Rivero was named. And he, like so many of those political appointees, one of the things they're most interested in is visiting every state in the union, or visiting every province.

Q: I can't tell you how often in interviews, particularly political appointees, this is one thing that they say—I went to every province.

JOVA: Its one way to escape your problems.

Q: Yes, it is because these are usually protocol trips and really accomplish very little, except showing yourself.

JOVA: Showing yourself is fine, you should have an idea of what is what in that country, but you can overdo it, particularly in a centralized country like Mexico. The action is in Mexico City. You don't realize how big it really is, and how varied it is. It takes longer to get from Tijuana to Mexico City than it does from Tijuana to San Francisco. Anyway, it had different problems and that sort of thing, but the real job is where the power is.

Q: Before you went there Henry Kissinger was still the National Security Adviser. What was your feeling, because obviously this was not a routine assignment, about the interest of President Nixon and Henry Kissinger who were two very major players—both through ability and interest in world affairs. When you were going out did you get any, either discussions with them, or emanations from them about what they wanted from you?

JOVA: One thing, and one thing only. The drug problem, narcotics. There was also an acute demoralization in the U.S. government. Nobody knew what was going to happen in the presidency. Kissinger himself was affected, he was trying to maintain things on an even keel. My secretary was seconded probably for a period of a couple of months, or six weeks, to be one of Kissinger's secretaries, and she told me it was kind of horrifying the things she heard in that short period between Kissinger and the White House, and Kissinger's remarks about the then President Nixon.

Q: This was the precursor to the Watergate thing. It started during the election of '72, and the after results of the Watergate investigation started in '73—he resigned in '74.

JOVA: Yes, and I didn't go to Mexico until January, but was named in '73.

Q: What were you getting from the State Department, any other issues that they felt you'd be concentrating on when you went out?

JOVA: It seems to me that I'm always charged with some frivolous matters—that's a terrible word to use. When I went to Chile to be Charg#, it was to persuade the Country Club to cut down the pine trees that obstructed the view because a mistake had been made in the plan for the very important embassy, and the land was two meters lower, but anyway this was a big thing. When I was going to Honduras as ambassador, it was also some little inconsequential thing.

When I was going to Mexico, it was the American cemetery, which was our oldest battle monument outside of the United States. The Mexicans wanted to move it using the pretext that they were putting a super highway through. The British had given up theirs, and why shouldn't we give up ours. And the then Mexican Foreign Minister, who was an insecure person, particularly in view of the fact that his brother was married to an American Jewish lady from Brooklyn. Due to that and an unusual interest in soccer, she had become friendly with Henry Kissinger. So that was one thing that Henry Kissinger wanted to please them on, get rid of that cemetery, give it up. Well, that turned out to be much more complicated than one thinks, and with a lot of emotions. And imagine, you had the Battle Monuments Commission up here, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the remnants of the war in Mexico, all up in arms—the American community. I remember that being a big, big thing with the Foreign Minister for the first few months that I was there. We finally worked something out. And mind you, it took months, and with a lot of interference from other people, like the Battle Monuments Commission. We finally gave up part of the land, and were able to reduce the size of the cemetery, and consecrate those bones all in one place.

Q: This is part of the web and woof of what ambassadors do, and what attracts attention.

JOVA: And it was the same on drugs. I heard the same story on drugs over and over again wherever I went. Now, I didn't hear this from Kissinger, and I did not see Nixon. I think this was a very bad time.

Then, we had big trade problems. We had the problems of Echeverria. It was a real problem to us in the United Nations and in bilateral relations because of his spouting anti-American oratory, and taking difficult positions. He was the leader of the Third World in the United Nations, particularly on economic matters and developmental matters, etc., That became his big, big battle cry—the economic rights and duties of states. It was in the great big major conference room of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. And, of course, later on the devaluation of the Mexican currency, many things like that happened later on. Later on, border problems, commercial problems, etc.

Q: What was the situation with Echeverria, and how did we see him? What was his span of time there? How did you deal with him, and what was your impression of him?

JOVA: Echeverria is a very interesting personality, and also kind of a boring personality, if the two things are possible, because he was very repetitious. I found this true of both presidents. They say the same thing over and over again, criticizing their opposition, or making their own points over and over again. On the bilateral basis, in spite of the public declamations, we usually were able to arrange things, and we really had a pretty good deal. Mind you, his only aide was quite well known to us, as a younger functionary in the Ministry of Interior, then finally the Minister of Interior which is a top political position. He was working very closely with their own agency here. This is one of the reasons that he had to take even more overtly anti-American stances because he had a guilty conscience in respect to that, and because he had to protect himself against criticism. We took over a place that was in deep, deep trouble beforehand as far as disturbances and riots. After all, 1968 was, like in most of the world, traumatic in Mexico too. They were prepared for the Olympics, and they had the student riots—the president gave the order but he had to

carry out the order to fire. And, of course, to shoot down students in any country in Latin America is a grave...well, here too, look at the Kent State thing and the effect that had.

Q: This is obviously an unclassified interview, but its also no secret that the Minister of Interior...you've always had this almost anomaly in relations with the United States and Mexico. The Minister of Interior and our FBI, CIA and other agencies have always worked very closely together. I mean many things that haven't gotten political. Its really foreign affairs which is left to be the place where the Mexicans can stick it to us, whereas in normal working relationships it works fine. And he was part of the machinery.

JOVA: He was the leader of the machinery. And you're right. The U.S. has to be a little bit thick-skinned, sticks and stones will break my bones, but names will never hurt me, a little nursery rhyme. And take it a little bit as a big power, and let it slide off our backs. But in various times in the relationship, this would be taken personally by the occupant of the White House, or the Secretary of State.

Q: There was considerable concern in the United States, what do we do if there's another Mexican revolution with the leftists taking over? This was a major public debate, or discussion anyway.

JOVA: People forget that, and also the economic crisis, and particularly the monetary crisis. First the unwillingness to demand an accountancy because it was almost a sacred thing...well, “we won't give this up.” It was a big thing and eventually was given up to 25 to 1.

Q: This is the peso to the dollar. It was 12 to 1, then it moved to 25 to 1.

JOVA: After that, a bigger change was made but that was the first step.

Q: Were you ever able to speak to Echeverria without getting a speech? "I understand your position, but this just isn't playing well in the United States, and can we not do this?" Could he be reasoned with on this?

JOVA: Sometimes, particularly when it came to some piece of action that might be disguised by oratory; then it was done. Some things just took a long time. For one thing Mexico is centralized, and yet it isn't centralized. One little incident: a convention of travel agents there—two travel agents disappeared, a man and a woman, presumed dead, and they were. And that went on forever, to find them, fix blame. In the meantime, the widower of the female travel agent with a little child strapped to his back, was parading on 16th Street in front of the Mexican embassy. We never could get anybody to take the blame, or anybody who really...and eventually we pulled all the strings. "It's the state police." "Oh, no, this is the judiciary police." You know, passing the buck back and forth. And the ministry got into focus on that, and of course something like that is bloody when you have to recognize that you're at fault.

Q: What had happened?

JOVA: They were killed by the state police that was just notably corrupt, and the bodies were found in some swamp eventually, but I'm talking about months, months later. Echeverria eventually played a helpful role when he could be made to focus, and keep his feet to the fire.

Q: Echeverria, did you find him in private a different person, or was he his political persona still going full blast when you'd go in and see him?

JOVA: I had a very deep family problem, and he came in personally to the residence to speak to me, and to express condolences and offer help. This was a very unusual thing, to show this human aspect. So its easy for everybody to be dumping on him once he's gone. And on the other hand, including intellectuals, say when history is written they are going to

find he had many more positive things than people are willing to recognize now. He had a great many negative things too. And lots of people feel he was very wrong. Mexico always has to have a bit of anti-Americanism in any of its policy, but he overdid it. After all, this is a delicate relationship that you can't be taking the cow to walk too much, if you want to get the milk. Its better to try to find ways to eliminate, or overcome obstacles if possible. We do things unthinkingly. We do things not thinking what's going to be the effect over the border. It's just incredible. But the Mexicans also have to analyze the situation each time, and hopefully they're cool about it. Actually things got worse with the next one, because he got along so badly with Carter. It was very bad chemistry there.

Q: Tell me, as you observed it, we're talking about the time of Echeverria. When you're dealing in Washington, with the American government, it's not always the President. It can be the National Security Adviser, some aides, the court if you want to call it. How did you find dealing with the presidency of Mexico at that time? Was there the equivalent to a White House court, or people that you, as the ambassador, found were influential?

JOVA: Well, certainly the sub-secretary of government because you can't go see the president. Sometimes you may want to send something through the chief of staff, sometimes you may want to deliver a message yourself, and certainly if you wanted an appointment with the president, it was much better to do it that way, than go to the Foreign Ministry, and protocol—they make a big thing out of it—or have you wait. So it was always done that way, and better to do it that way and not throw it in people's faces. And an important member of the court, of course, was the madam. She was important and you certainly had to be nice to her.

Q: So because of his background he had to overcompensate. How about Madame Echeverria?

JOVA: She came from a very highly political leftist family from Guadalajara. Her father had been head of the University of Guadalajara, most leftist, and most famous, the nearest

thing to a Marxist-Leninist...and the sons the same way. So she was very nationalistic, and she loved China and all those slogans. She is the one that was responsible for painting on every possible wall the same kind of dumb slogans that you see in Cuba, and certainly in China. She was not somebody I'd go to see, but somebody we went out of our way to be nice to, and she was always very nice to us, and to others.

Again, when I was briefed by the agency on this they gave me a biography with a psychological profile of the president. There were only two lines about Mrs. Echeverria, feminine, although I don't think she was particularly feminine, but a great help to her husband. Nothing about her family background. All this I discovered, since it was well known there, that she was a very strong personality, and she did come from a very highly politicized family that was extremely leftist. An interesting thing that wasn't in the biography at all.

Q: And particularly for this key country as far as we're concerned.

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Q: Today is May 20th, 1992 continuing an interview with Ambassador John Jova. John, when we left off the last time when you were talking about the CIA giving you this very cursory profile, and also about they're wanting to sort of limit your access to the president. To carry it a little farther, was it your impression that this profile of a man they should have known intimately...

JOVA: No, I think it was purposeful. It was more than cursory. I gave the wrong impression. It wasn't cursory. Well, it certainly played down his overtly anti-American aspects, which incidentally were more talk, I think. It was talk because he had to cover up precisely the fact that he was born on the frontier, and his first years of schooling were with American nuns on the American side of the frontier, he told me once. Well, that he had to play down, and the fact that he was a close associate of the CIA all those years in the Interior Ministry, and then eventually as Minister of Interior. And then as president

obviously he had the same sort of connections that were kept on. I often suspected perhaps some of his blatant populist stances, etc., were sort of a cover compensating for his past associations.

Q: To follow through on one theme, again this is an unclassified interview, but how did you find your relationship with the American CIA?

JOVA: It was good. It was very good. I'm sure sometimes we had confrontations, but it was generally good, and they understood that I wanted to see the president whenever he wanted me to see him, and whenever I wanted to see him. And sometimes I would let them arrange it, other times I knew the right-hand man, I could call him. And I would see him also which made them a little bit uncomfortable. He, incidentally, never wished to be seen—only but once was I in his office.

Q: This was the sub-secretary of the Interior.

JOVA: He preferred to see me at the ambassador's residence, and he would fix it up for me to see the president within hours, or within days—very rapidly. If you did this through protocol, it was like a big deal, you'd never get an answer, or it would take three weeks to answer the Department or the White House. But done this way, and not flaunting it in front of the Foreign Ministry, otherwise you were treated with the same degree of rapidity that the Bolivian ambassador might receive.

Q: What about the relationship with the Foreign Ministry? The Mexican Foreign Ministry has always seemed to be kind of the burr under the saddle of American-Mexican foreign relations. How would you describe its attitude, its personnel, and its effectiveness in dealing with them?

JOVA: Well, you're right about it being the burr under the saddle because that was the favorite way the economic people played ball for what they wanted. Not that we gave anything, not that they would take any, but they wanted the arrangements to get the

Mexican tomatoes in, or whatever it involved. The Foreign Ministry, if everything went right, they'd be the big apostles of non-intervention in the United Nations and the OAS, non-intervention in the affairs of others. So they were used for that, and of course, they had a lot of people that were specialists, and had lived years doing one thing or another, United Nations affairs, or frontier managers. I was three and a half years with Mexico, I forget how many desk officers we had, and it got even worse after I retired. And they'd change all the time. I remember one time that of the eight persons in the Mexico section...

Q: This is in the Department of State.

JOVA: ...six of them were leaving all at once, the director of Mexican Affairs, his deputy, six people were all leaving at once. I remember talking to Joan Clark...

Q: Director General.

JOVA: I said, “Joan, this is terrible. I know its not my business, but this just seems a terrible way to run...” And this is true of Mexico which is so important, where continuity is so needed. It must be even worse in some of the other places. This is something that has been imposed on us by what used to be called the Young Turks, who are now old and graduated, and the AFSA, the union too, because the Foreign Service officers felt they all had to have more variety of experiences, and that everybody should get a chance at political desks, geographic desks, and not be stuck in whatever, the boring things of life.

On the other hand we had very hard working people, sometimes the Mexicans were less hard working, or had been there longer, but they usually had positions that were inherited. Of course, if they're too good they haunt us, like Castaneda who was a problem, and eventually became Foreign Minister. He was very good. Of course, we're suckers for that. If somebody had a nice old face, and he's blonde, everybody takes it for granted that they're much better than some brown Indian type. And then his step-son, Andrew Rosenthal, he of course was even blonder, and a Russian mother, and the father was Jewish but American. But certainly a very, very intelligent young man. Hated by his peers,

partly because he had been to American schools, American colleges, but partly because he was such a hard working, smart person.

But also, on the American side, even when they were negotiating a fisheries agreement with the father, by the end of the meeting we had everything, or mutually agreeable solution, and suddenly young Andrew Rosenthal, the son-in-law, would come in and he'd start asking the wrong questions, and pushing the step-father, and the first thing you knew the agreement was undone, and we had to start all over again. I like this man. I think he's very smart, and he was a personal friend of mine from before. He was just a pup when I knew him when he was the third or fourth man on the Mexican Delegation to their mission to the OAS. He got in trouble then too by being too smartass and the Honduran ambassador (who wasn't the brightest at that time at all, now dead.), suddenly asked for the floor and complained about the smartass, intellectual superiority, etc., of this young man. He said, “After all, I'm a graduate. I'm one of the few Hondurans with a doctorate from the University of Mexico. Not only that but I'm the representative of my country here. My brother is married to a Mexican, therefore we consider ourselves friends of Mexico and to have the second secretary of the Mexican delegation mocking me, and making superior remarks about me face to face in committee meetings is too much, and I object.” Well, this was very embarrassing for the Mexican ambassador. He sent him home for a month or two until this calmed down, and they let him come back more chastened, but that was when he was young.

Q: I've never served in Mexico, and my only real contact with them was when I was with the Senior Seminar. I did a series of interviews with foreign consuls in the United States to get a feel for the other side of the Hill, and the Mexican consuls in Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, and some other places I went, were quite different from any of the other consuls, including those from behind the Iron Curtain in those days, in their bitterness. They felt that either they weren't allowed easy access to Mexican citizens, or Mexican citizens were arrested but didn't want the Mexican consul to come. Anyway, there was a lot of bitterness there. I would think that this problem, that maybe occurs in the United States for various

reasons, would reflect on when these people came back and worked on the desk. Was this a problem?

JOVA: Most of your frontier problems, and protection problems, are always very difficult. They were a headache for us. I'm sure sometimes they were a headache for the Mexican representatives in the southwest and around the country. Mind you, some of those people specialized, and this went from one consul to the other and stayed forever, and married American wives and sometimes married two or three times.

Q: They weren't as likely to end up in the inner circles of the Foreign Ministry then.

JOVA: In some cases. But in some cases that's where they got their start. They became experts on border relations. Rafael de la Colina, who was the Mexican ambassador to the OAS in my day, and was the wise man of the Mexican foreign service, and also in the OAS, a delightful person. He could turn on the bitterness when necessary, but usually he was a philosopher. But he spent most of his lifetime doing just that both in the ministry, and border consulates. But he also made the big time. He had something in Europe, and he was the Mexican ambassador to the U.S., the White House. At one point he was ambassador to Japan, and then he came back as ambassador to the OAS, and stayed there. He became a fixture for many, many years. A Mexican was his first wife, because I knew the son later on in Mexico City; and then he married an American, she died; and he married another American. And when they retired, they're living out here in the lovely suburb of Merrywood over the river in Virginia.

It wasn't a very organized foreign service...I'm talking about the past. Also, strangely enough, a foreign service where the people didn't want to serve abroad. Quite the opposite of most foreign services, and ours. We want to serve abroad. In Mexico they were happier at home. There was not another place like Mexico, and that was how their wives felt, and they felt. They could live well, they probably had money when the Mexican peso was strong. It isn't like the Argentine, they all wanted to be here because one dollar would

buy a million dollars worth of Argentine pesos at one time or another. They had younger professional foreign service officers, not political appointees although if they were lucky they belonged to a family that had political interest that might help. One of the criticisms of the Mexican embassy here was that they had a lot of people that had stayed forever, and were older, and maybe had married American wives, or maybe not, but were sort of encrusted in the embassy structure. And then an ambassador would change and he would bring political appointees, or people that were going to go with him when he became Foreign Minister later because many of them were sent here. Now the type of young people that the ambassadors bring with them is apt to be much better. But at least now they have the energy, and the astuteness to cultivate congress, and to cultivate the press which they used to do less well than some other countries such as Chile. Chile, with a smaller embassy, were up all over the Hill all the time, and knew everything and the press. The Mexicans were more relaxed, or adjusted, or also because they didn't want us doing the same thing down there.

Q: The reverse side of the coin, how did you find the embassy when you went there? You were there in '73. What was your impression of our embassy, and its strengths and weaknesses?

JOVA: We had some good people there. Some of them I brought. One of our few bigger embassies—mind you, the bigness was in other agencies, agriculture, FBI, you name it, they were there. But the Foreign Service part of it...well, start with administration. It certainly was better than Honduras which was bigger than you would think. In Mexico, security, just a little example; here we had all that security in front of the chancery, and in back there was nothing practically. The garage door was wide open. Anybody could have sped through one little sleepy policeman, and blown it up because that was a favorite trick. I said, “Why don't they close it?” “Oh, it will wear out the mechanism to go up and down.”

Here where petroleum was so important we had somebody who does commercial reporting, and they're the ones who really started reporting that they'd discovered the oil—through the other agency. That should have been one of our key things.

For cocktail parties, oh sure, a whole bunch of embassy people would be invited but usually they'd be clustered and talking to each other. But then for seated parties, how many people of that embassy would add something to a dinner party, as far as speaking Spanish. We always had the same little handful of people rather than spread that out more. That's where I would also question our examination, our whole process. You had people that were wonderful, intelligent as far as brain power went, but as far as personalities, and openness, and dealing with foreigners...At first we weren't producing that kind of persons, or certainly the wives weren't that way. They didn't want to go out. Of course, this was the business of wives' rebellion. It had just started but I gather it has tapered off where it is more reasonable. But you had some like that, not realizing what a wonderful opportunity it was also for a spouse to participate in history, so to speak. I'm giving you all the negative spots in it.

They had one of those economy drives, and they abolished the position of staff assistant, I suppose you'd call it, to the ambassador. And I fought, and I gave up. And I said we'd upgrade this very good secretary and she'll serve, but reluctantly. But it also presented such a bleak picture, they were closing consulates, and would I do my share. Well, the minute I left the ambassador came in with a high-powered junior officer from Wisconsin, and a staff assistant, the whole thing.

Q: How about the political section? How did you feel about their reporting? Or were they relying mainly on newspapers?

JOVA: We had some that were very good, particularly cultivating the younger members of the PRE...

Q: PRE being the party in power.

JOVA: We had others, the senior ones that didn't want to leave Mexico City, didn't want to go traveling around, didn't have that skill of cultivating people. Really that position could be filled in Washington, and just have airmail editions of the Excelsior and the El Diacio.

Q: These were the major newspapers.

JOVA: ...sent up to Washington, and they could do it perfectly well, and not have to pay for housing, and all that sort of thing. We had some that were very good, and had extensive contacts among the younger people.

Q: Where did you go for the younger people? Were these people you had sort of kept an eye on from previous posts?

JOVA: There were only two or three people. It wasn't like the old days where you would ask for what you wanted. I brought my staff assistant, it took him three or four months before they would let him come.

Q: Who was that?

JOVA: Bill Moffitt, very nice, and very good. And I brought two people for the political section; one that had been working for me in our mission to the OAS. Again it took several months for him to come. He subsequently became an ambassador.

Q: Who was that?

JOVA: Frank Crigler. And also another one that was on the desk that I didn't know before, but on the desk he was taking care of the briefings and I was very well impressed with him. And he was one of the ones who developed extensive contacts, Hamilton. And his wife also became a Foreign Service officer. She was in the consular section.

Treasury had a very good person there, not at first but the one that we had the second part of my time there, and who stayed for years and years and then I think went back. Its awfully good to have a few people, if they're good, that do build up that kind of depth there. And, of course, Treasury was so important to us. His name was Pasco; he's here now at Treasury.

Q: How about the labor side?

JOVA: We had a pretty good guy there. That's very difficult to penetrate, or it was in those days. Then he left and they sent us somebody who didn't speak any Spanish. That, I remember, objecting to, because I said they should have someone who can really get out there because you're cut off altogether if you can't build up some contacts. And that was difficult.

USIA, they had some good people. I had a big knock-down drag-out fight when one left, and they assigned me somebody who was an Eastern European specialist. Well, that was fine, but I said, “That's the wrong person, who doesn't speak a word of Spanish to deal with the cultural...” But there again the acting director of USIA made such a point that's its better just to accept this. It was one of those fights that went on for several months. He was a very nice person, and he did all right, but he had a very, very big handicap. At that time I was doing a lot with USIA, so much so that I understand young officers all over the hemisphere would say, “Oh, we'd like an assignment to Mexico because Ambassador Jova is doing...” I'm pointing out the weak points in the staff, and I haven't given enough emphasis to the strong points.

Q: You were talking about the USIA. How did you find it in that period, what was the role, and how did you deal with the Mexican media as ambassador?

JOVA: Well, when I got there they were very hostile, their attitude, very challenging. I must say, and again with the help of USIA, I had pretty good relationships including personal

relationships, including some of the difficult personalities. By the time I left they were quite positive. Some of the usual stuff stimulated by USIA, but some that had really been developed through personal contact. The editor of Excelsior, and a very powerful person—a rather squat person—became a personal friend. And the same way with the editor of a news magazine who had a strong anti-American bias partly because he was on one of those awful lists that he couldn't come to the United States.

Q: We're talking about being on the visa look-out list as being ineligible for a visa.

JOVA: He was leftist, but he had been accused of being Marxist. By the time I left he did a cartoon caricature of me on the front page and a nice article. Now, mind you, they'd throw you a left ball, but generally good. I had an openness with them.

Q: I'm talking about the main elements of the press that you had to be very careful about interviews that they'd distort what you said, or was it pretty much a free give and take?

JOVA: The American press was worse on that. I had a terrible experience with that.

Q: You mean here in Mexico?

JOVA: The Mexicans might well distort something, but on the other hand our relations became quite good within the realm of the possible, let's put it that way. The New York Times man and the Washington Post woman became personal friends and I'm still in touch with them. My complaint about the American press was a television interview that I gather at one time the Foreign Service Institute used as an example. But you have to be careful of an open-ended interview on which you're just going to choose something at random. This was for CBS, one of the major chains, and it was on the American prisoners. This was a big problem at that time. The accusation was that the American citizen prisoners, drug running usually, were abandoned. They were being mistreated, harassed and tortured by the Mexicans. I think I can be proud having worked a lot of that protection. It so happened that one young vice consul, now a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, was

in charge, Donna Hrinak. She had that terrible job in the consular section—visa lines—but then she was in protection and was one of the ones visiting the prisoners. She did a wonderful job. I was so happy to see her here as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State—it doesn't seem that many years ago.

This interviewer was covering that same problem, and the questions were all exacerbated. I went to visit and there wasn't room there to swing a whip, and they said they'd been whipped. Once somebody was arrested, however, we had to remember that this was an American citizen, and therefore, like Saint Paul, “I am a Roman citizen, and therefore not subject to the torture.” I think this is true, American citizens feel that way also. In some cases they were interrogated in a very nasty way, with sometimes American participation.

This was my big quarrel with the DEA, the Drug Enforcement Agency. I collaborated with them in everything else, but on this aspect it was one that was very delicate. This is good because sometimes we could get information that we could never get at home with all our constitutional protection. Remember, this could harm us enormously. Look what happened to the police program which is run by AID in Latin America. And that was really a good purpose, to modernize the police forces, teach them the new things without necessarily having to shoot the victim. But when they were faced with terrorism in civilized places like Argentina, or Uruguay, what happened? What destroyed, what caused Congress to abolish the program? Because they said it was confirmed; they could hear American voices while they were being tortured; in effect for intervention. And the Americans were then listening and looking, because they were getting such valuable information on terrorists and communist movements. Well, that was enough to cause Congress to cut them out. Here the same thing had happened, it was the wrong thing.

Q: You were talking about American prisoners and the participation of the DEA people. And you were saying that you'd worked with the DEA, warning them not to get involved.

JOVA: I think I was a source of strength. I had access to them at any time, the Foreign Minister of course, but the Minister of Justice, Director General or whoever it was that was in charge of the drug problem. And I think we did great things collaborating together as a country team, and the ambassador is a very important part of it. But the mistreatment of Americans, sometimes it was unintentional. The jails were no good and in some places the jailers were mean. In other cases there were interrogations but we were in no way condoning torture, or illegal methods of interrogation.

I paid for it later. I'm not going to go into it here, but there was a resentment on this particular thing that perhaps caused me trouble.

Q: On this television interview, did a question come up about that?

JOVA: This interview was almost suspicious, I realize now. “There must be something good about this approach, about their being arrested, and imprisoned. Can't you come up with one good thing that flows from this?” This is after an hour. “Yes, I suppose if even one single person is dissuaded and discouraged from participating in the drug trade which is such a terrible thing. Its affecting the whole social fabric of the country. In that case, I suppose you could say yes, something good has come of it.” “That's fine, that's just what I want.” The interview finished. “Thank you very much”

And the next thing I knew I was up here in Washington on consultation, and the desk said, or the Secretary's office, “What the hell has Jova done?” They were getting calls, the American ambassador let those bodies swing, that sort of thing. Complete misinterpretation, completely taken out of context. It's much better to do an interview and say, “OK, as long as you're going to use the whole thing. I'll make an on-the-record statement. Two minutes, do it, but I won't talk for an hour and you just chose what you want.”

Q: What about the prisoner situation? When you got there, and while you were there, did you find that you might say the enforcement side was the predominant side? Because there's this terrible dichotomy between the enforcement side, and we want to stop drugs, punish the people. And the other one is protecting the Americans.

JOVA: For the Mexicans this was an easy way, a cheap way. “We're strong on the drug war. We got these Americans at the airport ranging from young people, to grandmothers sometimes.” Some American kids are so dumb they bring marijuana into Mexico to smoke during the two days they're going to be in Tijuana, knowing this is a paradise, and then get caught. Some were the couriers coming from Latin America with cocaine, for instance, and just transiting the airport. But rather than going after the real drug lords that were organizing the heroin trade, they would go after the marijuana stuff, and the cocaine that was brought from elsewhere, and yes, they'd collaborate on the heroin too, but they couldn't show statistics. That really wasn't affecting them in any way. Now, once this guy got captured the temptation was to get as much information as they could, in some cases very violently; and in some cases they were just badly treated in the jails. If you didn't have somebody to give you food, you didn't get food; or you had to get a good cell or you'd be sleeping out in the courtyard. But at the same time we must recognize that in many of the jails they were better off than they were here. Some jails were very nice, all wallpapered and that sort of thing, for women and for men also.

Now, my work also was with the Foreign Ministry, as well as with the enforcers. The enforcers didn't want to talk about it. “You're insulting, you're driving us crazy and here we have results, and this is the way a Mexican would be treated too.” I remember the Foreign Ministry saying, “This is embarrassing. I can just see the embarrassment for this government, on a civil rights violation because this is really a human rights...these individual cases are interpreted as violations of human rights.” In some cases they're no-goods, other times they may be no-goods but they come from good families, and that means they're related or they have access to the Congressman or the Senators, and that's

why we're being driven crazy. And there are headlines in the U.S. press all the time, and the Department is getting all these complaints, and we're being pressed by members of Congress. Well, the law is the law.

And finally one of the last Foreign Ministers of my stay there, said, “You're right in taking this under study.” But the main thing is to find the formula, and this is not an exchange of prisoners, but exchange of sentences. And it has to be mutual, work both ways. That when we propose that any American, that you say, “We'll exchange his sentence, and we'll take him to serve his sentence in the U.S., and we'll agree to it. And any Mexican that wants to serve his sentence in his homeland, we'll turn...” So it isn't judging the validity of the process of the court process. So I set that up, and no reply from the Department. Then I set up another one and I said, “Look, this is unusual, and this is a Mexican initiative on a problem that we've spent so much time, and so many representations on. Now they've come up with something that's possible. Maybe it should be changed a little bit, but please...” No, no, it's against the law from L.

Q: L being the Legal Adviser's office of the Department of State.

JOVA: Then Kissinger arrived on one of his last visits, and I said, “You're going to have problems with this. They're going to raise this.” And sure enough, we called on the Foreign Minister and obviously he was kind of annoyed and humiliated. He'd made this constructive suggestion at some risk...and getting a negative bureaucratic answer from our side. And Kissinger, of course, could get things done, and he said, “Put another set of lawyers on that.” Well, that worked out, and a treaty has made legal history. By that time I had retired; I was so pleased many months later, maybe more, when they called me—you don't often get this—from the Department, actually the Legal Adviser who had worked on this; Monroe Lee was involved except by that time he was out too; they invited me to the Rose Garden ceremony for the signing.

Q: How did you find your dealings with the Drug Enforcement Agency? In the first place what control did you have over them as far as their participation in interrogations and things like that?

JOVA: They did their own housekeeping, and they sent down one of the big senior persons in it. How long it has lasted, I don't know, but at that time I said, “No, we can't put ourselves in the position where we're accused of something that goes against the U.S. constitution, and to say publicly that we can get information here that we can't under our system.” So that was that. Later on I'll speak personally.

Q: Moving on, what about another problem that I'm sure must have been with you all the time, immigration?

JOVA: Oh, yes. At that time it got quite acrimonious because a Marine General had been appointed commissioner of immigration, and he wanted results. This was back in '74. “And we'll send them back by God.” So for a while it was terrible to see these planes coming in; buses sometimes; but a lot of the time a plane; and all the passengers would get off; and then this little huddled group that had been returned with their little possessions, old rags and a few little...it really made a terrible public relations image, if you want to look at it that way. Here they had gone up there to work, and they'd been sent back—some of them after having lived there a long time, and some of them just captured. And, of course, the Mexican press played it up, and the Mexican government played on that greatly. It's a law of supply and demand. As long as there's a demand for it here, and actually its applicable to drugs also—as long as there's a demand for it here somebody is going to be producing it if the price is high enough. As a Mexican said, “I never saw a diving board without a swimming pool.” And, of course, this is what we're facing now. I think education...just as we've turned people off about smoking tobacco. I'm not going to enter into that thing, whether it should be legalized or not.

Q: Back to the immigration side. We're talking about supply and demand.

JOVA: The same thing. There's a pull-push. A pull from here, and a push from Mexico because there the conditions are hard. The more prosperous Mexico is, then the less push there will be. In a depression there's apt to be less pull. But there again it has to be done humanely.

Q: Was this a matter of negotiations, or complaints?

JOVA: Oh, yes, all the time. Were they doing their part to prevent the flow? First of all the constitution says a Mexican is free to move anywhere. So there had been a program to make life easier and better in the northern part of the country, to encourage them to stay there. But naturally it wasn't a perfect program, far from it. Perhaps they could modify the constitution, reform it, amend it. “But look, Mr. Ambassador, are you asking us to build a Berlin wall type of situation where we prevent people from getting out? That's what you think about eastern Germany.” And, of course, if you look at it that way, it gives you pause. How can we ask them to keep their people in with machine guns, and the wall, or whatever it is? Now it's up to us to keep them out as best we can, but we have to do it in a humane way, an effective way. I don't know, particularly after I came back and I testified. This was changing the law here, reforming the act. It has helped for a while by the way. I gather that right now it has helped less.

Q: Well, you didn't have many tools to deal with this problem, did you really?

JOVA: The tools would backfire. The business of exploiting willy-nilly like the general was doing; or building the fences. And, of course, that stupid man...”Yeah, they're going to cut their feet climbing over this fence,” because it had razors. It hit the press, and that was awful in those days. The other thing is, everybody has the right to control their own borders. They also recognized that it was up to us.

Q: Today is June 2nd, 1992 and this is continuing a set of interviews with Ambassador John Jova. John, I wonder if you could talk about your impression at that time of the ruling

party of Mexico. How we felt about it. I've always been uncomfortable. I'm not a Mexican hand, but here is obviously a corrupt one-party system which lectures to us on all sorts of things. But this is an outsider's view. How did you feel and deal with this party at the time?

JOVA: First of all, it works. When you think its given Mexico 60 years of peace. And the figleaf, if you will, of democracy because after all they could preach to us, they could preach to the rest as the envy of all the other Latin Americans even though they mocked it. I mean they were sarcastic about it, but still if they could organize something for themselves, they'd be very happy. I'm talking about the Central Americans and that sort of thing. The other thing, they are hated by our right wing, our extreme right.

Q: Of course you were there during the Nixon administration which, although it was not dominated by the extreme right, it was part of the Nixon system.

JOVA: Oh, yes, but those were realists. I'm talking about the further right. Sure its infuriating, the fact that they criticize us, and they're so sanctimonious about it. But on the other hand, as the French inventor of the gear shift said, “It's brutal, but it works.” Well, that's how it is but up until now its worked pretty damned smoothly.

And there also was for a long time the mechanisms by which the people felt they were participating. After all, they had the votes, the rallies, and the benefits of pork barreling, etc. Now naturally those were the real beneficiaries, the professional politicians because its true. Of course, no reelection to that particular job, but they all got other jobs. They couldn't be reelected again as a deputy, but they could be elected a senator, or as a governor of a province, or a mayor of the city, some of those professions, but all their life being elected.

Q: I take it you really didn't have good contacts within the party structure itself.

JOVA: You had contact with the senators, the mayors, and the governors. But with the people actually running the party at headquarters they were apt to be more delicado about things, particularly to the ambassador, or at least in my time.

Q: Did the party set policy? Or was it really set by a ruling group which used the party group in the time you were there?

JOVA: Of course, the president is a very important person, don't kid yourself. But on the other hand, there are others that give the continuity to it all, and they have to make sure that the various live forces are sort of kept in balance. In other words, the labor movement, which is very powerful, believe it or not. And that was headed again by an old master who when I was there was considered so old that he might die at any time, or would retire, and what would happen then? Well I left there, 14 years ago I'd say and he is still the head of the labor movement. Those are very good genes, those Aztec, they're apt to last a long time. Well that and the teachers' union are important; the oil workers union.

Then they have their practical people. They have to have business; the bankers; not too cozy but they're sure they're getting their share. Its one of those things you could spend your life worrying about, and analyzing, and how does it work. A friend of mine who used to be our political officer (since then has gone on to be an official in the Peace Corps, then an ambassador twice), said, “Now that I'm retired, and doing some consulting, I want to find some time and study and see what makes that damn thing run.” But after all, the very fact that its kept peace in Mexico, and our border, and on those things which we've been able to come to arrangements on, why that's been very good for USA.

Q: Did you have a problem on the corruption side? From all accounts, again I'm speaking as somebody who really doesn't know. The system is really corrupt and Echeverria retired with considerable cash reserves.

JOVA: That goes back long before that.

Q: I mean, others have done this, and up and down the line. This is part of the system. Here you are, the American ambassador, you have people who really don't like the situation in Mexico, particularly as you say the right wing...

JOVA: And also to the left wing because this is really democracy, you know.

Q: Did you find there was a problem in reporting on corruption? Corruption is always there, you can always write a long report on it, but if you write a report it sure as hell will leak. And if it leaks it just causes trouble, and what's the point? Did this come up at all?

JOVA: It came out in the press. It was very hurtful. If some brave press person there discovered something and printed it, or published a story; then, “Oh, the right wing in the United States is undermining me.”

Q: That's a reporter, but what about the embassy? You've got bright officers sitting around looking at the political situation; corruption is a major part of the political situation; pay-offs, or whatever it is; yet if they report on this or overemphasize it, although it is important, it surfaces back in Washington...

JOVA: Where nothing is secret.

Q: And then it can be used and it just causes trouble. Its never resolved, it just causes trouble. Did you have to deal with this, watching the reporting?

JOVA: Its true, sometimes to a young idealist you say, “Cool it. We know its really not democracy, don't make such a big thing about it. Its working.” Most of them were practical. Well, you know most of those countries are so corrupt. Cuba used to be so corrupt. I've had Cuban relatives, they went to do business in Brazil, and they said, “We've never seen anything like this, its so corrupt.” “What about Cuba?” “Oh, that's nothing.” Maybe they knew their way around, I don't know. But in Brazil, their impression was, it was infinitely worse. There's all kinds of corruption. There's the little corruption, I suppose we do it when

we give Christmas presents to our trash collectors, and the newspaper delivery boy, that ensures that they give us better service for the rest of the year. And, of course, there's an awful lot of that in Mexico, but small stuff for the policeman, the little functionaries. They have to live, their salaries are so poor. I'm not talking necessarily about the policemen, that's more disgusting. You know, to make sure the paper gets on top of the pile rather than underneath.

But what's more disturbing is the big corruption. You can almost tell when you approach the house of a politico. First of all there's the armed guards, and then a big house, and flood lights, then an antique automobile, or something of that sort. Or maybe it would be something else, maybe its art. Usually its not something in very good taste. Way back to Aleman, and those who were so respected by Americans. He was sort of pro-American, and not only as president but afterwards as a big father figure there in Mexico. So he probably stole, a lot of it he made. He made Acapulco his project, and he did so much for that and he owned so much land. They named the coastal seaside drive, Costa Aleman, out of gratitude.

But by the time I was there, Mexico was bigger, and therefore there was more to be corrupt about. The compound, the master's house, it was a favorite thing, and houses for children, he gave it to the University of Cuernavaca in the state of Morales. The other houses that he built are much more modern and better. Then by the time you got to Mr. Lopez Portillo, and before the big bust came, they had already discovered oil. Mexico was in a state of shock after Echeverria, and poor. They couldn't even pay the embassy up here. The only thing they were spending money on was the oil company, wisely. They kept that under production because they had just discovered these new fields. Well, after that Mexico was like Saudi Arabia for a few years. In Europe and Paris the hotel people talk about those Mexicans. “Oh, yes. Those are the sheiks like the Arab sheiks that speak Spanish. Spanish speaking sheiks.” They were throwing their money around just the way

the Arabs did. There was much more for Lopez Portillo to become one of the rich men of the world.

Q: Did the problem of corruption come to your official attention? I'm thinking of the Port of Veracruz, the rake-off of the unions, or in oil.

JOVA: Oil was very corrupt—the oil workers were very corrupt.

Q: In a way it didn't involve us. But did you have to go and say, "Your dock workers, or your railroad workers, are holding up American firms." Or was this a matter that came to your attention?

JOVA: Yes, it had to be done rather delicately, I suppose. Some things were insoluble. I think it was the Hilton, they were furious. They gathered together businessmen in New York that have an interest in the country you're assigned to...and it was this Hilton Hotel man, they had lost the Casa Hilton, and it was taken back by Aleman (who really owned it) but they ran it for many years, and spent money on it. "This has never happened to Hilton. We must get that back." Well, that was a challenge, they never got it back, they never got what they wanted there. That was Aleman. Who would you complain to in a case like that? The government...he was a sacred cow, friendly to the United States. He had his own story too, the Hilton hadn't given him a fair deal, or whatever it was. Anyhow, years later that was one of the hotels that I think was greatly affected by the earthquakes, but that's a moot point.

Q: Did you have contact with the PAM, this being the opposition party. It played a little role in those days.

JOVA: In the past perhaps it had been strong. In my day it wasn't strong at all. Well, of course, it got much stronger afterwards. Most of one's friends were probably PAM, if they weren't members or sympathizers. I'm talking about one's social friends. They were very useful. Sometimes I'd say, "Hey, are we spending too much time with the bankers?" Well,

not only were they the most civilized, but there is where you'd meet ministers in a relaxed setting that you wouldn't get sitting across a desk from them. The other ones who really had a vested interest in making this system work, coopting the people; it was very nice to know them and be invited to their events. They'd contribute to both parties regardless of where their heart was, just in case.

Q: You brought up something for someone looking at this, a student of diplomacy in future years. It seems to imply that you do better business in Mexico—this could apply to other places—in an informal setting than going to somebody's office.

JOVA: Definitely. No question about it, or at least that made it possible the next time you went to his office to talk in a different way.

Q: Why was this?

JOVA: I think its probably human nature, and also its very Latin, and particularly with American representatives. Sure, there was apt to be a little bit of a distance because of self respect, and because of officially anti-American views, etc., or fearful of being tagged as too pro-American. I think that's a very important aspect.

Q: Is there something in the American characters the way we do business, or something, that you found sort of rubs the Mexicans the wrong way?

JOVA: I know when I was assigned there, the Mexican ambassador to the OAS was the dean of not only the OAS corps of ambassadors, but of the Mexican diplomatic service. We had lunch, and he said, “John, a piece of advice. Be slightly aloof, and treat people with dignity. That means a lot there. Its different here once we get to know each other, we were all quarreling, and yet drinking together in multilateral forums. But remember, when you're dealing with Mexico, you're dealing with the successors to the empire of Montezuma, followed by the vice royalty of a Spanish era, and then our own Mexican president, particularly with the president, and then with the others of official importance.

Because they are the heirs to those traditions, and don't forget, they love the French in spite of the fact the French invaded them. They are very taken with French culture, and French diplomacy. And the French love to tweak the tail of the American lion, and that's appealing also."

But in general a well set table, and correct placement...mind you, after you know them, then you can be very intimate. I must say in that Pamela deserves a lot of credit, because as I mentioned, a well set table and a well cooked meal, there's no question, that means something. Its no big deal to go to the American embassy for a meal because they eat better at home. Its not like here; to go to an embassy is sort of a big thing. They eat better at home, they have all those servants, and I'm talking about Lisbon, Madrid in the old days, as well as Latin America. So if you're going to play in that league, and develop the atmosphere where you are on a first name basis and relax, this counts for a lot.

Q: Having this in mind, did you find that you were directing your other officers in the embassy to do likewise? Would you sit down and, not plan strategy, but how does one develop this, or did you just assume they knew as well as you did, and they would follow by example? How did you direct your officers who had the main contacts with the Mexican authorities?

JOVA: It was hard for the officers, for the younger officers who didn't have much money, and didn't have as much representation. By the time its divided, what the ambassador spends they usually manage to cover us one way or another. But by the time its divided up for the first secretaries, and the second secretaries, and third secretaries, it doesn't give them that much. But they could still do things nicely, and make friends. But, of course, their targets obviously were apt to be different. There were younger officers there, the ones who could get close to the pre-activists. But the bright young people in the political section could get close to the Christian Democrats in the case of Chile, and the new ones coming up, etc. The same thing is true of Mexico. And those were the proper targets for them. If everybody tried to see the Foreign Minister, that's the wrong thing. And you sometimes

see that in the Service. Somebody that's married a rich wife, or they're socially ambitious, they want to entertain the Foreign Minister, or the President if they can get away with it. That only creates confusion.

Q: It could be a disaster. Moving up to the northern tier of Mexico, we have a string of consulates there, an awful lot of cross-border arrangements dealing with water, and with enterprise zones. Again going back to the time you were there, did you find 1) were the consulates useful, doing more than doing their normal work, and 2) taking care of Americans in trouble with immigration?

JOVA: This closing down of consulates because its a wonderful statistic. We've closed so many posts this year, and I know two or three Americans in a consulate were able to do much more contact than the same number in the embassy. So it was harder, you just have to work harder. But I'm for keeping up the consulates. I recognize that now there's the additional problem of the security involved and it costs so much, I've been told, to maintain a consulate with the proper super-secret communications, and security measures, that its almost a financial constraint, a truly financial constraint, not just a helpful statistic as in the old days.

But to the extent that we could have the consulates, and to the extent that we had people there just not to do visas—that's not a put-down to the visa issuers—but have some sense of what they can do as far as really keeping the embassy and the Department informed of the spirit of that section of the country they're in. And, of course, Mexico is quite a diverse country. The north, for the reasons you have stated, near the frontier the industrial zone. They're meat eaters, they're wheat eaters, which really makes them physically different than the ones further south...different kinds of Indians to mate with, and there's perhaps a higher proportion of Spanish blood in the north.

Q: How did you find you were served by the consulates in this regard in your time down there?

JOVA: We had a mixed thing, but we had some good principal officers in those consulates, particularly in the north. In the south we didn't have very much, Merida, Guadalajara and Monterrey, those were important consulates, almost little embassies, so we were well served.

Q: Did you find that unlike any other ambassador, maybe our ambassador to Canada, but you had all these agreements which ran almost state to state, rather than country to country up along the border. Did these intrude? Did you find we had a policy and they'd say, "Yes, but what about the Arizona-Sonora agreement?" Or the people there had been talking to the American Department of Interior, and they've already taken care of this, or they're doing this. You must have found a lot of that going on, didn't you?

JOVA: There was a little bit. I don't recall it being a problem, because anything really important, the central government in Mexico had to agree on, and certainly we did. Then, of course, in the whole Rio Grande, the water business, there was a coordinator for that too that had been there for many, many years. He was one of those people who was able to stay on and on. I'm not even sure that he was really a FSO, but played a very useful role. And the same way with the desk here, they had one person—maybe its more now—but in charge of keeping in touch with that coordinator, and the water problems of dividing it up.

Q: In dealing with the Mexicans, how did you work it as far as explaining the United States? Obviously they're deluged with information from the United States. But you're the ambassador to interpret it. I'm thinking of the various groups; one is the TV; the university students. How did you deal with these and try to explain America?

JOVA: Well, you did your best. We don't understand our own government sometimes. One of the things that's very interesting is the fact that there are American study programs. This was something new. It was just beginning in my day, and that was something certainly that we encouraged through USIA, and from the ambassador's office. There were plenty

of Mexican study programs even then, almost too many. Sometimes I would say, “They're studying this place to death, let it happen.” But its very good to have them now studying the U.S. because it is more complicated than one thinks. Of course some business people knew more about us and would know how to get things done.

Q: Did you find yourself acting as a teacher a lot, in a way explaining how things worked, to member of the Mexican government?

JOVA: A bit yes, and to the president, yes. Of course they had a very active interparliamentary activity—Mansfield, who loved Mexico and he was at the top in the Senate...

Q: Head of the Foreign Relations Committee, Mike Mansfield.

JOVA: He had a special fondness for Mexico which meant that that interparliamentary movement was very active between the U.S. and Mexico. Also Mexico was fun, therefore they had no trouble rounding up people to come down. There was a similar one for Canada but I gather they frequently have difficulty rounding up enough important people from both houses. Mind you, it was different when they'd come up here. It was embarrassing when it was the turn of the U.S. to receive them. Hardly any congressional people would come, and the Secretary is busy, the Deputy Under Secretary is busy, and maybe even the Assistant Secretary for Latin America wasn't there.

And, of course, they are so different. They may be poor as a country, but when it comes to receiving, they don't have the budgetary constraints that we do in the Department. Therefore, when it was their turn to receive for the meeting of the interparliamentary things to take place in Mexico City; or frequently in one of the state capitals; why, they'd throw the house out the windows—the best food, singing, and all that. Where here they'd have to scrape together to give a little lunch in the congressional dining room.

Q: I remember talking with Senator Pell one time, and he said, "I get this wonderful treatment abroad, and when they come here all I can offer them is bean soup."

JOVA: That meant, of course, they pushed the State Department to spend some money to give the reception. We were short of money, they didn't have unlimited funds either, but still they would do something but it would be very, very different, cars assigned to you down there. We can't do that.

Q: You were there during an unique period in American political developments during the Watergate period. How did you explain Watergate and the eventual expulsion of Nixon from the presidency? How did you deal with the Mexicans? How did they view it? It was difficult for everybody, all the Foreign Service trying to explain this.

JOVA: It was difficult, you're quite right. And it was anguishing to see the television of the Nixon family. And to Mexicans it was just something they couldn't figure out. Well, the same thing was true in Europe. In northern Spain we had gone to visit and old people would have a little altar to Nixon, believe it or not. "Oh, that's one of the best presidents you guys have ever had." In Mexico, they're practical, they thought Nixon was a good governor.

Q: He had been a senator from California too which made him closer to Mexico.

JOVA: Yes, they liked his practicality.

Q: Using our expression, did you have to wing it, or did you get instructions, or advice, on how to play this one from Washington? Or was Washington too embarrassed to do much about it?

JOVA: There must have been some advice, it might have been boiler plate. Everybody was buttoned up about it.

Q: How was American TV received in Mexico as far as what they were doing? Did this cause upsets, or not—some of the things that were put on, Mexicans portrayed poorly, or something like that?

JOVA: Mexican people portrayed poorly, something like that the press would get and play it up. They got American TV, but not the political news in those days.

Q: Were TV news people coming down to Mexico and then coming back with things that made life more difficult for you?

JOVA: They're very independent but at the same time very sensitive, and very suspicious even if they know these things can't just happen with our press. The minute there would be a series about how bad the Mexican system is, corruption, political maneuvering, or if it really was a democracy, right away they're putting pressure on us. “This just didn't happen, this is that bad congressman from Georgia. They're doing that on purpose. There's a little group of right wing people that don't like us.” And they'd call you up and speak to you about it.

But they also know how to manipulate the American press, and they had favorites that they would invite always, distinguished Americans, and several distinguished press people to the annual report to the nation by the president in September. And were they taken care of while they were there! They were really guests. Of course, that was a cross for the poor diplomatic community, or the chief of mission beginning with this one because it went on for so long—hours. And the president speaking and all orchestrated, everybody would stand up whatever he said; applaud if he kicked the U.S. Sometimes we'd bring flasks, and take little nips. And a couple of times I was out of the country, then he'd put the devils interpretation, “The American ambassador was absent. He was at home. He avoided coming to inform me.”

Q: Did you find that the American ambassador in Mexico was watched rather carefully? How did this work?

JOVA: Well, that's a newsworthy person, or personage. So in other words, right away they'd try to grab you and interview you on the street. And, of course, that's very European too. The columnists were always...big examinations of what caused what. We are very poor at that. We think its dumb, or terrible, or just cranks that do that.

Q: An American diplomat thinks that most Europeans over analyze things and they see patterns. Well, they're not patterns.

JOVA: Or they're less patterns than we think they are, or they're not patterns. I'd tell them, “Listen, we're not that well organized. I wish it were true in some cases. I wish it were true that a whole Machiavellian scheme could be carried out by the State Department, Pentagon, working with the White House,” that sort of thing.

Q: Then what happened? The president of Mexico had just to the delight of the audience kicked the United States in the testicles, and somebody sticks a microphone in your face, and they say, “What did you think of the president's speech?” How would you reply?

JOVA: You think of something, particularly if at the same time he might well have said, “Our relations on the other hand are better than ever, etc.” Well, then you'd emphasize that. “Basically our relations are good, as he's said to me over and over again.”

Q: How did you and the embassy view the Mexican armed forces? Unlike any other Latin American country, and many other countries, you never really hear much about the armed forces because they often are so much a power.

JOVA: They're very aloof, and very secretive. The other Latins found them that way also. I remember Guatemalans, or Central Americans specifically, “Oh, they have a zipper on. We never know what they're thinking or doing.” Within the possible, our attach#s, and our

mission, worked on it and developed personal relationships. And I knew quite a few of them because the attach#s would want me to come to their dinner party, or for me to host them. So you got to know the top ones. They were close mouthed, and the system was very respectful of them.

Q: Did you find that it was generally agreed that we weren't to offer too many goodies to the armed forces, to make them any stronger? Did you find there was any conflict about what we could give, and what they wanted?

JOVA: No, it was more a budgetary problem of what they were willing to buy. I can't remember that being a problem. Naturally there was a lot of cooperation on things they would use for drugs control. So much so that that was going largely to the Minister of Justice. At one point there was unease that the Minister of Justice had more planes than the Minister of the Air Force had. Naturally they weren't fighter planes. Mexico doesn't accept AID. Now they have an AID office, but again doing very restricted things. But there was no Peace Corps, and no AID in my time. The AID mission wasn't a mission, it was an office for publishing books. After that they got into birth control. After I left they changed that, but they do have an office now, a relatively big one, but not really to help, the way they do in other countries. They are so worried about being bought by us, or appearing to need our help much as they may need it. It all has to be done in a very relatively subtle way, or not done.

Q: What about the southern area of Mexico? I hear a great deal about the northern tier, but the borders with Central America and down there? Was this of any concern to us? Or what was happening down there?

JOVA: Yes, it was. That was one of the things which I think afterwards became more constrained. But even then it was of concern. First of all, the illegal immigration; because just the way Mexicans sneak in here, Guatemalans and others would sneak in. And that's the one thing we could agree on. Knock down those illegal vagrants from Guatemala

crossing the border, who eventually a good portion would come up and cross our borders. That and the fact that Guatemala had a very active revolutionary terrorist movement going on. Our military people and their military people would discuss that; much more after I left because it became more of a concern. But, of course, the central government doesn't want them to get too involved in anything of that sort. But they were pressing for that because they were concerned for their own strategic purposes.

Q: Were you able to get officers down to the troubled borders in the south? Or was this, "Stay out of here."

JOVA: It wasn't that troubled, and we did go for one thing or another because in effect there was a whole zone there in that narrow part of Mexico that became a barrier.

Q: How about Cuba as a factor? I mean events in Cuba, had they pretty well run their course and it was sort of old hat, or did Cuba keep popping into the conversation?

JOVA: Oh, Cuba kept popping into the conversation with Echeverria. Even if they made loud noises about how bad our Cuban policy was, and voted against it in the OAS, remembering that the Mexicans were the only ones that didn't vote for the expulsion of Cuba from the system, or the suspension of Cuba in the system. After that flawed past, then a working arrangement that was relatively comfortable grew up between the then Mexican government and ourselves in regard to Cuba. Talk big, but cooperation underneath on the flights and photographing, that sort of thing.

Q: But with Cuba were there any major sticking points in the four years you were in Mexico? Or was it just that you found things not quite as friendly?

JOVA: Definitely not; the problem of their votes in the OAS and the United Nations, and their general relationship, etc. This is Mexican policy; that's a fellow country, and this is their government. It's up to the people to throw it out themselves, we shouldn't participate. But that was true in many countries.

Q: Well, John, tell me at the end of this series of interviews, you left when the Carter administration came in. You'd had your normal four years in a major embassy, but tell me how did you view, and how is it viewed? The man who was appointed your successor was sort of a shock to a lot of people in the Foreign Service and out. I mean he was an ex-governor of Wisconsin, Lucey, really didn't speak Spanish. It was sort of an odd assignment, and from all accounts didn't work out very well anyway. At least this is the Foreign Service scuttlebutt. At the time, how did you feel about this?

JOVA: Carter felt very strongly that, the way he put it, our relations with Mexico were so important that this just can't be left to anyone, or a career person. It should be someone really close to the president who has chosen him specially. Well, of course, there were all kinds of internal party reasons, I think, for appointing Pat Lucey because of what he had done in the election, what he hadn't done.

Q: He wasn't part of Carter's inner circle anyway.

JOVA: No, but this was his payoff because he'd given him support at the convention. I can't remember the circumstances, but there was a political debt there, and he justified by saying this would give visibility of our close relations. No, it was the wrong appointment. He is an intelligent person, a nice person, and his wife was living up here rather than down there.

Q: We're talking beyond your period but just to get a feel...one of the things I heard was that when Lucey came (which happened later on too under Gavin), he had staff aides there who completely shut out everybody, and very suspicious of the Foreign Service. They were going to do everything their way which, of course, doesn't work.

JOVA: I remember somebody at that time telling me, “We might just as well have the newspapers flown up here. We could do it just as well as far as the reporting we're getting from the embassy itself.” Who knows, they might have kept me on longer. Mrs. Carter

actually made soundings, and Pamela said, “Oh, no, we have other plans.” “Are you sure they couldn't be changed?”

Q: John, looking at the Foreign Service, and a young man or woman comes to you and says, “Mr. Ambassador, what about the Foreign Service as a career?” How would you respond?

JOVA: Well, its a different Foreign Service, a different world, so its difficult to transpose. I know there are headaches and different things completely, but at the same time people used to say bad things about it in my day. I found it a very satisfying career, a wonderful career. And by saying I found Meridian House more rewarding; well, you didn't have to report to somebody so much. A lot of things you were able to do for yourself without the bureaucracy, the Department, etc., and I didn't have to worry all the time, “Did I say this to somebody?” if it would hit the press. I remember an admiral used to tell me that in World War I on destroyers they used to say, “It's a helluva war, but it's better than no war at all.” But I would say, “It's a helluva Foreign Service, but it's better than no Foreign Service at all.” I'm sure there's many good things about it even if its different, and many rewards there for the person who approaches it with the right attitude, and with his wife with the right attitude. I'm sure there are immense gratifications and opportunities to serve the nation as well as have an interesting life.

Q: Thank you very much.

End of interview